

Workshop Emphasizes Oil Spill Readiness During Pacific Partnership Exercise

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— Categories: Defence & Security



A four-day workshop in Papua New Guinea brings together Australian, U.S., and PNG officials and industry representatives to prepare for potential oil spill disasters. The event, held in Port Moresby in July under Exercise Pacific Partnership 2025, focuses on enhancing coordination, sharing expertise, and building resilient networks ahead of crises.

Participants include the Australian Defence Force, the U.S. Department of Defense, and PNG counterparts. Flight Lieutenant Emily Chapman from the Australian Civil-Military Centre underscores the central role of relationships in effective disaster response. She states that workshops like this are crucial for developing shared readiness and ensuring that international assistance integrates smoothly with national structures.

PNG's National Maritime Safety Authority's Marine Environment Protection manager, Pawa Limu, acknowledges that the country has the necessary equipment to respond to major oil spills. However, he emphasizes the value of practical experience shared by international partners. He notes that learning from past communication challenges in foreign operations allows PNG to enhance its organizational response and coordination in future emergencies.

The workshop, facilitated by the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, includes reviews of prior spill responses across the region, discussions on PNG's governance framework for emergencies, planning sessions for potential future events, a site visit to review response assets, and detailed tabletop exercises to test readiness and response plans.

Exercise Pacific Partnership 2025 serves as the U.S. Navy's largest annual humanitarian aid and disaster relief mission in the Indo-Pacific. The Australian Defence Force's involvement underscores its commitment to a resilient and prosperous Pacific, strengthens interoperability among participating nations, and reinforces regional disaster response capabilities.

By combining operational knowledge with local insight, the workshop advances collective preparedness for environmental emergencies in the region. Its practical focus on coordination, communication, and capacity-building ensures that all responders, domestic and international, can act swiftly and effectively when responding to oil spill incidents.