



26 April 2016

## **Another PowerNet Team Heads to Fiji to Support Recovery Effort**

Five more PowerNet staff leave Southland and Otago for Fiji this week to assist with the reconstruction of the country's electricity services that were severely damaged by Cyclone Winston in February.

The latest team brings the total number of PowerNet staff to work in Fiji over the next few weeks to 10, as it joins other Contractors from New Zealand that have been working in Fiji since early April repairing and re-installing fallen power poles and electricity lines.

"We're very pleased to be able to provide this additional assistance to Fiji's international recovery effort and support Fiji as it gets its electricity supply fully functioning again," says Jason Franklin, CEO of PowerNet.

"It's great that we have a fantastic pool of highly trained and skilled staff that we can draw on to provide this support," he says.

The second team of line mechanics leaves Invercargill on Wednesday (27 April) and will return on 17 May. It comprises leader Mark Isaacs (based in Gore) and members Rob Gray (Balclutha) Hector Diamond, Taura Patterson (both based in Invercargill) and Mike Johnston (Te Anau).

The previous team of Reece Stephenson (leader), Mark Payne, Joe Clarke, Sachin Chand and Cory Sutton, returned from Fiji on the 25<sup>th</sup> April.

The second team will work in the same area as the first team, about an hour's drive inland from Lautoka.

The labour intensive repair work includes disconnecting fallen lines from poles, clearing debris so that powerlines can be reconstructed safely, erecting fallen power poles, re-stringing power lines, and re-installing fallen transformers and other overhead distribution equipment.

The very hot and humid conditions mean team members have been carefully managing their hydration levels, needing to drink up to 10 litres of water a day.

PowerNet also plans to send a third team to Fiji in mid-May. Over time PowerNet staff on each of the teams will be rotated so that team members don't become fatigued and so that other PowerNet staff can also benefit from the experience of working in an environment that is different and challenging, however very rewarding.

It's anticipated that PowerNet will supply staff to support Fiji's recovery effort until June.

**ENDS**

Contact:

Jason Franklin

027 214 5309