

## **New Zealand Police send more officers to Samoa**

**Source:** Government of New Zealand

**Date:** 03 Oct 2009

New Zealand Police are sending additional specialist staff to Samoa to assist the search efforts in areas worst hit by the earthquake and tsunami.

An earthquake of magnitude 8.3 followed by four large waves hit Samoa on Wednesday.

"Tomorrow morning 12 staff from the Specialist Search Group and two specialist dog handlers with victim recovery dogs will leave for Samoa," Superintendent Stu Wildon, Operations Manager for International Service Group said.

On Thursday, New Zealand Police sent two Disaster Victims Identification specialists, two radio communications technicians and Assistant Commissioner Steve Shortland to Samoa to make an initial assessment of the area and what resources may be needed to assist recovery efforts. These staff are liaising with Australian counterparts (Australian Federal Police) to ensure coordination.

"We deployed two technicians with radio equipment to set up radio communications on the south coast where the Samoa Police are concentrating recovery efforts, 'Superintendent Wildon said.

"Superintendent Shortland met with the NZ high Commissioner, the Samoan Police Commissioner and senior officers and visited the worst hit areas. He is due to return home today and will inform discussions of further potential support to Samoa Police."

The New Zealand Police is fully engaged with the Wellington based inter-agency response to the disaster. 'We will remain engaged with the wider inter-agency effort and will consider future potential support to the response and recovery effort. "

ENDS

*Please note there will be no further comment by Superintendent Wildon at this time.*