

RELEASE IN
FULL

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, January 27, 2010 8:44 PM
To: H
Subject: FW: Cusco Update # 6

fyi

From: Smith, Daniel B
Sent: Wednesday, January 27, 2010 6:23 PM
To: Mills, Cheryl D; Kennedy, Patrick F; Crowley, Philip J; Verma, Richard R
Cc: Toiv, Nora F
Subject: FW: Cusco Update # 6

Here is the last sitrep for today. Evacuations are going well, but Embassy Lima hopes to accelerate the process tomorrow. The morale among those still stranded appears to have improved. There are 16 embassy employees in the area providing support.

As of 5:30 p.m. Wednesday January 27:

- Air operations are just winding down for the day. Over 530 people were evacuated today, including at least 62 amcits. **Our folks report that all amcit children have been evacuated.**
- **Ambassador successfully negotiated permission for further Embassy personnel and specified consuls from other Embassies to enter Aguas Calientes. We don't want this information advertised publicly – other Embassies that didn't get in will be upset.**
- Embassy officers in Aguas Calientes report that **tension is way down**. Most tourists see that there is a fair system in place to evacuate them, and are awaiting their turn.
- The GOP continues to fly in food and water on the helos, and our folks report that it is getting consumed quickly.
- **MAAG has asked SOUTHCOM for authority to purchase 10,000 dollars worth of food and water in Cusco to assist the GOP in keeping the stranded tourists properly fed.**
- GOP says that 670 people registered to hike the Inca Trail to Machu Pichu, and we are aware of 200 who have arrived. **There will surely be amcits among the 470 who haven't arrived yet.**
- We will send one additional GSO person to Cusco tomorrow to assist the 16 Embassy personnel currently in the area.
- Peruvian authorities report that the rail line from Aguas Calientes to Ollantaytambo (the only land route out of Aguas Calientes) is under water or covered in landslides in at least 7 places. Prospects to repair the line quickly are dim. **We will remain dependent on the air bridge.**
- The two additional NAS helos arrived on station, and will participate in air operations beginning tomorrow. There are now 6 NAS helos on station.
- U.S. Embassy personnel are working tonight with the GOP authorities in an effort to streamline (and speed up) air operations, with an eye towards increasing the number of people we can evacuate per day.
- **We will begin switching out Embassy officers tomorrow and Friday, and replacing them with fresh personnel.**

Next update will be Thursday at approx. 9:30 a.m.