



Disaster Relief Project Update



READY TO LEAD

By Pastor Deyvid Batista, President, Adventist World Aviation (AWA)

When I was sent to Montego Bay, there was only one goal in mind. The goal was to train several pilots in our Cessna 206 and prepare them to take over the operation of moving supplies and people throughout Jamaica. I didn't realize at the time that it would become so much more than that. I made lifelong friends and established excellent working relationships with several people across the country who helped us complete our mission.

With only seven days on the ground, the mission shifted from a steady marathon to a high-stakes sprint. Every hour of daylight became a precious commodity. We bypassed the usual formalities and dove straight into the cockpit, operating on a "wheels up at dawn" schedule that tested the endurance of both the pilots and the airframe. The intensity of that week forged a unique kind of bond. There was no time for second-guessing; the pilots had to master the Cessna 206's heavy-haul capabilities while navigating the tight approach into Treasure Beach under real-world pressure. We weren't just practicing—we were performing.

By mid-week, the exhaustion was eclipsed by a shared sense of urgency. We were delivering crates of food and water from Kingston and Montego Bay to Treasure Beach, turning every training sortie

into a live relief mission. Seeing the pilots successfully manage a landing and takeoff at the challenging dirt strip of Treasure Beach under the blistering afternoon sun was the moment I knew they were ready. They didn't just learn the manual; they learned to respect the aircraft's limits in the rugged Jamaican terrain.

As the airliner I was on taxi'd out to the runway to depart Montego Bay, I looked out at our Cessna 206 one last time. A week is a heartbeat in the grand scheme of things, but when you're flying with purpose, it's enough time to change the landscape of an operation. I came to teach them to fly; I left knowing they were ready to lead.



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