

Second Meeting of the Pacific Meteorological Council (PMC-2)

1-5 July 2013
Nadi
Fiji Islands

Agenda Item 12.6: RANET Communications

Purpose

1. Provide a brief status on major initiatives of RANET in the Pacific.
2. Invite the PMC to recommend and guide RANET activities and focus.
3. Request PMC to identify national points of contact to assist with the development of the maptack.org initiative, which will help document equipment locations for gap and need analysis, as well as provide field support for outages, updates, and other administrative notifications

Background

4. RANET began testing and refining the RAPIDCast broadcast in 2011. The broadcast uses a low cost ground station to receive data. In late 2012 the program confirmed that the ground station configuration would work. An initial set of 15 ground stations have been ordered and are now being shipped to the Pacific.



Figure 1: RAPIDCast- Current coverage on GE23 utilizing west and east Ku beams.

5. RAPIDCast will begin broadcasting a Pacific sub-set of EMWIN, as well as LRIT. RANET expects to work with both NOAA and JMA to get appropriate satellite imagery products. For RAPIDCast RANET will also utilize the regional satellite data requirements, related surveys, and will consult with regional partners, such as SPREP and WMO experts, to identify content to place on the broadcast. .

6. RANET continues the Chatty Beetle system, and it has integrated Delorme InReach SE as a new device and form factor into its network. Twenty-four of these new units will be shipped to the Pacific. Funding for additional Chatty Beetle units is expected in late 2013 / early 2014.
7. Funding to upgrade the southern digital HF network hubs has been made available. Specific plans on where to create redundant hubs, and how to upgrade the existing hub, are still being discussed.
8. RANET continues the tsunami SMS notification, in which messages released from the PTWC are directed to key national and regional focal points.
9. RANET is renewing its effort to provide NMHSs with web services hosting and training; given the convergence of many communications systems to internet and web technologies.
10. RANET established maptack.org to map and track communication and complimentary systems. It initially populated the database with Pacific site locations. The website and database will be used to identify needs and network gaps, as well as assist with basic notification during outages, transitions, and updates. For the system to work and be of benefit, national points of contact are needed to occasionally (every 3-6 months) review entries, and to receive notifications.

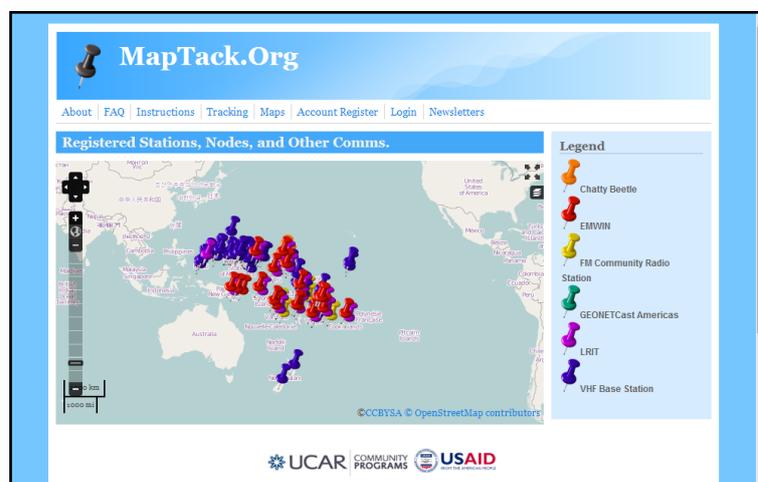


Figure 2: Maptack.Org- A RANET initiative to help with system tracking and updates.

Recommendations

The meeting is invited to

1. **Provide guidance** to RANET on communication challenges and specific needs involving dissemination to rural and remote communities, which have not been or cannot be addressed by use of HF, Chatty Beetle, RAPIDCast, etc.
2. **Provide guidance** to RANET on how best to improve existing initiatives of the Chatty Beetle and RAPIDCast.

3. **Provide guidance** to RANET on communications training priorities for national meteorological services.
 4. **Advocate** for the establishment of a regional ‘messaging fund’ to support on going message and service costs of systems and infrastructure, such as the Chatty Beetle and RAPIDCast, to avoid administrative costs of per country payments and to provide longer term service stability.
 5. **Identify and submit** national focal points and technical leads for the maptack.org initiative.
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