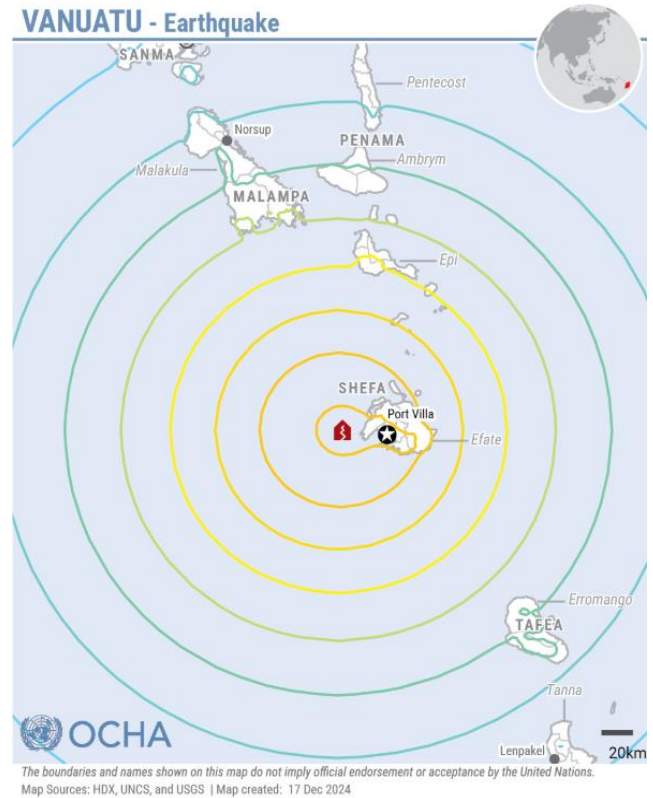


## Highlights

- A State of Emergency has been declared for 7 days, effective on 17 Dec 2024.
- Updated figure of 9 deaths and more than 200 injuries confirmed by the Ministry of Health.
- Approximately 80,000 people are directly affected.
- The National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) and the national cluster response have been activated.
- The Joint Police Operation Centre (JPOC) is supporting search and rescue operations.
- To complement the national response activities, the Government of Vanuatu has requested international assistance from the United Nations.
- Key immediate needs include healthcare, shelter, food, water, and the restoration of communication networks and electricity.
- Logistics teams are working to clear blocked roads and restore access to Port Vila and critical locations. Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs) from Fiji have been deployed. Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams from Australia and New Zealand have been deployed. EMTs and USAR teams from Australia arrived in Port Vila.



## Situation Overview

The situation in Vanuatu remains critical following the **7.3 magnitude earthquake** that struck on **17 December 2024**. The government has declared a **state of emergency** for 7 days, effective on 17 December 2024. A public curfew for the Nambatu area is active from 6 pm to 6 am except for essential services.

Infrastructure damage remains extensive; hospitals, roads, residential and public buildings, two major water reservoirs and gas pipes. Physical access challenges continue to hamper response efforts. Access to Port Vila International Airport is experiencing operational delays due to damage to its terminal building and road network, while the runway is functioning. The airport remains closed to all commercial services. Access to the seaport is also disrupted by a landslide, limiting the transport of essential supplies and personnel. Communication networks are not fully restored, complicating coordination and

assessments, especially in remote areas. Banking services are not available as ATMs are non-operational. Vodafone and Digicel domestic phone lines are reactivated (voice/SMS).

The United Nations confirmed that they are mobilizing humanitarian support requested by the Government of Vanuatu as part of the ongoing response.

## Impact and Needs

The earthquake has caused significant devastation, with **9 confirmed fatalities** and over **200 injuries**. Approximately **80,000 people** have been directly affected. The national Disaster Evacuation Centre Management Cluster (DEMC) is conducting an assessment of the shelter needs.

Hospitals in Port Vila are overwhelmed, with structural damage forcing the use of triage tents for patient care. Operating theatres remain non-functional, significantly hindering the delivery of critical healthcare. Triage tents have been set up outside Vila Central Hospital (VCH). VCH's maternity ward is operating through secondary supplies.

Two major water reservoirs have sustained significant damage, severely impacting access to clean drinking water. Gas pipes near the seaport in Port Vila were damaged, causing environmental hazards.

Key immediate needs include **healthcare support, emergency shelter, access to clean water and electricity**. Upcoming key needs may also include **food assistance**. Damage to roads and communication networks continues to hinder response efforts, especially in remote areas. Restoring access to critical infrastructure such as the airport and ensuring the timely delivery of aid remain top priorities.

## Response efforts

The National EOC is operational and National surge capacity and the national cluster response has been activated. The Joint Police Operation Centre is assisting with search and rescue operations. The power company UNELCO in Engie is working to restore water supplies and power supplies.

To complement the national response activities, the **Government of Vanuatu has requested international assistance from the United Nations**. The immediate needs are medical supplies and repairs to damaged medical structures, Mobile EMTs, USAR with heavy machinery for clearing, structural engineers, environmental emergency specialist, safe drinking water and jerry cans. OCHA is deploying a United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team to assist with the coordination of incoming assistance.

The National Security Task Force met earlier today to address escalating needs and coordinate the government-led response.

The **Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT)** convened its second emergency meeting today to coordinate access and support for the government-led response. The **International Charter on Space and Major Disasters** remains activated, providing satellite imagery to support damage assessments and mapping critical areas for intervention.

Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs) from Fiji have been deployed to bolster overwhelmed local health facilities. Additional EMTs are preparing for deployment to provide much-needed medical support. EMTs from Australia have reached Port Vila and EMTs from New Zealand are deploying. Efforts are also underway to establish temporary operating facilities and deploy mobile health units to reach affected populations in remote and inaccessible areas.

Logistics teams are working to clear blocked roads and restore access to Port Vila and critical locations. Coordination efforts are focused on ensuring that essential supplies such as food, water, and shelter materials can be delivered to displaced populations. Communication systems are also being restored to enhance coordination among responders and facilitate the flow of information from affected communities.

Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams from Australia and New Zealand have been deployed to support ongoing search and rescue efforts. The Australia USAR teams arrived in Port Vila. Additionally, 18 international USAR teams are monitoring the situation. A French helicopter arrived in Port Vila to support response operations.

## Key Humanitarian Priorities

- **Search and Rescue:** Continue efforts to locate survivors.
- **Health Services:** Strengthen medical response, including mobile health units and functional temporary operating facilities.
- **Shelter and Protection:** Establish and equip safe shelters for displaced populations.
- **Food and Water Supply:** Distribute food aid and ensure access to clean drinking water, especially with damaged reservoirs.
- **Logistics and Communication:** Restore transport and communication systems to improve response capacity.

## Contact Information

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