



JOURNAL

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God's Word is reaching isolated people groups around the world, and Ethnos360 Aviation is there to help.

READY, SET, SERVE!

R66 #2 for Papua New Guinea: You prayed for it. You heard it arrived into the Port of Lae in Papua New Guinea on July 6, 2023. But did it ever start flying?

Sometimes it's almost miraculous how fast an R66 can be reassembled and put into service. But for R66 #2, God's providential timetable proved to be different. The inspections and paperwork seemed unending. Many of you were praying that whole time.

Finally, December 4, 2023 – five months after it arrived in PNG – R66 #2 officially joined the “operational mix,” according to Imie Mark, Maintenance Controller of Ethnos360 Aviation's fleet in PNG.



Josh Verdonck doing his pre-start checklist.
photo by Imie Mark

Its first job? To take supplies to the team learning language among the Kovol people. Pilot Josh Verdonck posted, “Very honored to conduct the first mission.”

While Josh was fulfilling already-scheduled supply runs into existing church planting locations with R66 #2, R66 #1 (serving since April 15, 2022) was free to break new ground. Pilot Stuart Sims flew a survey team to a location

“about as far west as you can get and still be in PNG,” according to Imie Mark. They would “spend the night in one village, talking with the elders and trying to assess their desire (and rationale) for missionaries to come live among them.”

Pilots Josh and Stuart have been waiting for this day when they could have two helicopters to fly, adding a whole new level of capability to support existing church planting teams – and open the way for new

teams. “We can thank the Lord,” said Imie, “for bringing [the details] together in time for the helicopter program to support the ... surveys out west before the year's end.”

At nearly the same time, the Uruwa people in the central highlands were negotiating a land agreement so a missionary team could come into their people group to teach them God's Story. The R66s play an integral role in sling loading bulky items like water tanks into that location, enabling the team to set up for the long haul of language learning, translation and teaching.

Josh, Stuart and the whole team in PNG thank you for all your prayers and investment to get R66 #2 to Papua New Guinea. Because of you, the people groups like the one in the far west and the Uruwa closer by will have an opportunity to hear God's Talk.

To join the Ground Crew to pray weekly for Ethnos360 Aviation as it serves, email us at media_aviation@ntm.org.



R66 #2 carried a hefty load of supplies to the Kovol location.
photo by Josh Verdonck



Josh delivers one of two 9,500-liter water tanks to the Uruwa location.
photo by Nathan Brendle

PRECIOUS CARGO

It was “one of the missions that every missionary pilot wants to experience one day,” recalled pilot Bruno Siqueira.

Ethnos360 Aviation CEO Phil Koop remembers when Bruno’s phone call came from Brazil: Would it be within the scope of Brazil’s helicopter program to fly for a Bible dedication quite far out of the normal area of service?

It seemed like a worthy request. And then Phil heard the name of the people group: the Pacaas Novos – the very tribe he had grown up in!

About 67 years ago, Phil’s dad and mom, Abe and Dee Koop, had helped pioneer the outreach among the Pacaas Novos. When Abe was tapped for field leadership, others continued the work, including Barbara Kern, the key translator. She and her husband, Manfred, persevered through all kinds of setbacks, especially Barbara’s health, to complete the translation. She finished it just months before her homegoing in December 2022.

Phil did not have to think long about Bruno’s request. The work Phil’s dad had begun would, in a sense, be completed by the Ethnos360 Aviation helicopter.

Bruno felt the sacredness of this mission: “When I was asked to fly ... the Bibles to the village, with one of the translators on board, my heart couldn’t have imagined that I would be able to live that moment.”

As Bruno flew over the landing zone to signal his arrival, “something impressive began to happen. People seemed to spring up from the ground. The [Pacaas Novos were gathering] to watch the landing” – about 3,000 people in all.

“The most remarkable moment,” Bruno added, “was when I opened the helicopter door to help missionary Manfred [Kern] down.” When the people recognized their dear friend, the husband of translator Barbara, “it was crazy! Hundreds of indigenous people wanting to see the missionary, greet him, say a few words to him. It was super exciting. Right next to the helicopter, some indigenous people who were already leaders and pastors of local churches said a prayer of thanks for Manfred’s life, for the trip and for his presence that day.”

“I could only stand there behind the scenes, enjoying that moment and thanking God for the privilege of being in that place, at that moment, living that experience that I will never forget ... seeing a people receive the gift, the most precious possession that anyone can gain — the Word of God.”

That day, said Bruno, “we heard stories, we heard testimonies, we heard people reading the Word of God and praising God with various songs in their own language. Each speech, each testimony, all very impactful for everyone present.”

“I was able to return home with my mission accomplished — that of carrying the most precious cargo in the world, which is the Word of God, and carrying an 84-year-old missionary who had given his whole life, his energies, and his efforts for the sake of missionary work, transmitting the message of the gospel to people who had never heard of Christ.”

To keep flights affordable for all our church planters, go to Missionary Flight Sponsorship -

Ethnos360 Aviation.
[ethnos360aviation.org/
projects/missionary-flight-sponsorship-3](http://ethnos360aviation.org/projects/missionary-flight-sponsorship-3)



SCAN TO HELP



Bruno and his hangar assistant, Gilvan, deliver bound copies of the New Testament.



Pacaas Novos scripture open to Acts.



Villagers gather around Manfred Kern (center, in red shirt and white hat). Photos this page courtesy MNTB Communications

RELIEF!

Ethnos360 church planters Alex and Erin Williams knew they needed help: People were knocking at their door in a remote village of the Philippines asking for help to feed their families. Two days before, typhoon Egay had dumped 34 inches of rain in 36 hours!

“Rivers were raging, and landslides left villages unreachable,” wrote Alex. Needs became apparent

locations and landing on everything from river gravel bars to school yards to roads to cement pads in the middle of town. It put our flying skills to the test for sure as well as maxed out the capabilities of our helicopter.”

The government kept expressing gratefulness for the efforts of Ethnos360 Aviation, as in this memo: “One particularly noteworthy incident that showcased their dedication was when they reached out to ... six



Alex Williams helps unload relief supplies.
photo by Ryan de Roos



Ryan de Roos gets help with loading the R66.
photo by Carl Puygao



Brian Schaadt landed by a swollen river to deliver supplies.
photo by Ryan de Roos

immediately. “Stranded husbands unable to return home meant families couldn’t buy their rice. News also began to spread of six missing people in Butao. ... Friends were messaging to let [us] know that no one had arrived in Butao to search for the missing.”

A veteran missionary from another organization had been through typhoons before. He immediately ordered 200 kilos of rice for hard-hit Tubongan. Alex also heard of food relief available in another town. But relief would get nowhere without aviation. “That is where our assistance came in,” wrote Ethnos360 Aviation pilot Brian Schaadt.

Government officials coordinated with our pilots to bridge the gap of transportation. Pilot Ryan de Roos, accompanied by Alex Williams, “flew to Tubongan Bible Church to deliver 200 kilos of rice, [then] hopped over the mountains on a five-minute flight to ... retrieve [180] relief packs bound for Butao,” relates Alex. “In contrast, first responders had been hiking for two days to reach Butao and had only made it two thirds of the way.”

Alex continued: “After these initial deliveries, the mayor requested more flights to be done to deliver goods and personnel to the affected areas.”

“The helicopter flew in food packets,” recalled Brian, “taking off from the government center to various

stranded families ... in urgent need of assistance. ... With their expert assistance, family food packs were successfully delivered to the area, providing much-needed relief to those affected.”

Though natural disasters are never welcome, Ethnos360 Aviation is always ready and willing to help in the name of the Lord.

While government helicopters are busy delivering relief to other areas, our little R66 can reach into small and overlooked places. “It is great to be a part of something where people are helped immediately, and the love of God is shown so clearly. Our ability to help so quickly will be remembered,” expressed Alex. Brian echoed that: “When they see God’s people coming to help them in a much-needed way, we pray this leads them to give glory to God along with us.”

Alex concluded, “Lord willing, it will be used to bring the people of [this area] to understand who God is and what He has done for them.”



SCAN TO HELP

When people are in distress, we want to help. Join us: Disaster Relief Emergency Fund - Ethnos360 Aviation.
ethnos360aviation.org/projects/disaster-relief-emergency-fund-1

AN ARM REDEEMED

Machete in hand, young Habiana raised his arm to swing, intending to kill Keith Miles, the new missionary who'd come in 1979 to bring the gospel to the Tugutil people on an island in Asia-Pacific. Try as he might, Habiana could not get his arm to bring the machete down for a strike.

Fast forward to 2023. Pak ("father") Habiana raised his arm for a far different purpose: to hand a rock-weighted letter to pilot Jamin Peck. As they flew over Kilo48 village, Jamin threw the letter out the Kodiak window. It said in part, "Keep working hard on the airstrip – don't quit!"



Habiana drinks water from a vine – a good source for refilling water bottles, too!
photo by by Stiven Kadir

Days before, Pak Habiana had hiked 30 miles – 50 hours — each way to start building an airstrip in Kilo48, so named because it lies 48 kilometers inland from the coastal village where Keith Miles first brought the gospel. A few days after the hike, Jamin flew Habiana back over the village to drop the letter – taking a mere 10 minutes to fly from the coast.

The hike, though, had been nothing new to Habiana. He regularly treks – in flipflops! —

to Kilo48 from the coast to teach and disciple the believers. But the physical exertion is taking a toll on his aging body. So, when Ethnos360 Aviation agreed to survey the area and start clearing for an airstrip, Habiana was eager to help. He and four other nationals guided pilot Jared Kresge and aviation co-worker Stiven Kadir on the grueling hike over "slippery, mountainous jungle terrain," wrote Jared's wife, Carol.

"There aren't many souvenirs that can be brought back from an excursion like that," continued Carol. But the ones they brought back required hospital stays — Stiven with malaria, and Jared with malaria and typhoid! Later, Pak Habiana also experienced malaria-like symptoms and severe back pain. That's when pilot Jamin flew the Kodiak to medevac him from his island home to the hospital where Jared was. Even though he was sick, Pak Habiana took time to write the letter that was dropped into Kilo48.

Just a year and a half ago, Jared had flown the first bound copies of the Tugutil scriptures into the coastal village.

Pak Habiana now arms himself with those scriptures, not a machete.

He and other believers on the coast are determined to help the young church at Kilo48 to grow and thrive. They are optimistic that "Kilo48 is, and will continue to grow as, a hub for the gospel to go out to other remote villages in the surrounding area," wrote Carol. But "[Habiana] knows his future trips back and forth on foot to Kilo48 are limited," she added. Despite the work it will take, "he has a sense of urgency to finish the airstrip so that ministry can continue uninterrupted." No doubt, his arms will now be wielding a shovel, too!

You can be a part of the ministry to Kilo48 by participating in Flight Sponsorship to ensure that the tool of aviation will be affordable to Pak Habiana and others as they reach their own people in remote places.

Missionary Flight Sponsorship - Ethnos360 Aviation.
ethnos360aviation.org/projects/missionary-flight-sponsorship-3



Jared loved seeing villagers reading scripture copies that he had delivered.
photo by Stiven Kadir



Habiana, Jared (from far left), Stiven (second from right) and companions ready to begin the hike.
photo by Stiven Kadir



SCAN TO HELP