

# PRESS RELEASE



## TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Office of the High Commissioner

Saipan, Mariana Islands

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Marianas

### ROUTINE FLIGHT BECOMES MERCY MISSION

Truk

Saipan, Mariana Islands, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Feb. 23. . . . The Trust Territory, Peace Corps, U. S. Coast Guard, and Micronesian Airlines combined their resources yesterday to effect a mercy mission.

Ponape

Earlier this week Peace Corps Area Director Jerry Fite chartered Emmet Kay, Guam air taxi service executive and pilot, to fly a single engine Beechcraft plane to Pagan. Kay agreed, and his February 22 flight from Guam to Saipan started out as a routine flight.

Marshall's

In the meantime, Pagan health aide Francisco Masga radioed Mariana Islands District Administrator Peter T. Coleman that he was ill and a child needed treatment for gastro enteritis. He requested a boat be send immediately to evacuate them to Saipan. Mr. Coleman learned from his staff of the projected flight to Pagan and called in Kay and Fite to help solve the evacuation of the patients.

Yap

Palau

Problems continued to arise when Kay discovered that his normal supply of fuel for the Guam-Rota-Saipan-Tinian round trip would not allow him to divert his flight to Pagan one day in advance of the Peace Corps charter.

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At this point, Kay drew upon his 12 years of flying experience to solve the problem by calling upon an organization that is renowned for its resourcefulness and rescue service--the U. S. Coast Guard. Captain Arthur W. Mergner, Jr., Commanding Officer of the Coast Guard station in Saipan, made available flight fuel to allow Kay to take off for Pagan Island at 3:05 p.m. Three hours later the Beechcraft returned to Saipan carrying the child and her mother, and Masga.

An ambulance was waiting at the airfield, and a few minutes later the patients were receiving medical treatment. Hospital reports indicate that the patients, Josepha Matagolai Kaipat, 4 year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Mariano Kaipat of Pagan, and Francisco Masga, 21, Trust Territory Government health aide assigned to Pagan, are now in Dr. Torres Hospital in Saipan and reports indicate they are making satisfactory recoveries.

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WINHAM/PIO/2148