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News Release

RECOGNIZING U.S. URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAMS CONTRIBUTIONS

PORT-AU-PRINCE – The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Task Force Haiti commend efforts by urban search and rescue teams from Los Angeles County, Miami-Dade, Fla., and the City of Miami, who on Sunday rescued 10 people from collapsed buildings in Port-au-Prince. According to rescue officials, this is the largest number of rescues in a single day in decades of earthquake search and rescue efforts and brings the total number of rescues in Port-au-Prince by these teams, and a fourth team from Fairfax County, Va, to 35.

“We are all very proud of the efforts of our urban search and rescue teams,” said Tim Callaghan, of the USAID’s Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance. “This is an incredible accomplishment but it is even more significant for these survivors and their families.”

These search and rescue teams are part of a national framework for organizing local emergency services personnel for disaster response. Urban search and rescue teams can be activated and deployed to a disaster area to provide assistance in structural collapse rescue, or may be pre-positioned when a major disaster threatens a community. USAID can deploy these teams for international humanitarian relief efforts, while the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) can deploy them during domestic crises.

“The tireless efforts of these rescue teams is a testament to the dedication of the American response to the earthquake in Haiti,” says Task Force Haiti spokesman, U.S. Navy Capt. John Kirby. “The search for survivors is ongoing, and we hold out hope of rescuing more people in the coming days.”

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