

Case

The task was clear: Ship humanitarian aid from Manila to Myanmar – asap!

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Recently, our Aid & Relief team received that call from the European Commission. In close collaboration between our operations in Denmark, the Philippines, and Myanmar, they made it happen within a very tight timeframe when Myanmar was struck by an earthquake.

Due to the time constraints and the massive cargo volume, totalling 141 tons/535 cbm, only a B747 charter flight were a feasible option. It would do two roundtrips, and special permits had to be obtained from the Civil Aviation Authorities to land an aircraft of that size in Yangon.

However, challenges were building up from the start:

- The timing coincided with Easter in Europe and Holy Week in Asia, during which all offices, including the Bureau of Customs and all government agencies, were closed
- Therefore, limited on-the-ground personnel were available at such short notice
- The flights would leave from two different airports, Manila Metro and Clark, with a 2½ hours distance between them, putting pressure on the staff to prepare and ship the goods from the main warehouse to the respective airports

While an emergency response air charter shipment is inherently complex, our teams pulled out their detailed contingency plan and acted fast.

This is what a successful delivery of 462 pallets of humanitarian aid within 12 hours required:

- ✓ Round-the-clock communication and detailed coordination between the teams in Denmark, Myanmar and the Philippines to manage every step of the process and mitigate delays
- ✓ Continuous dialogue with the customer and authorities, including ensuring the required Dangerous Goods documentation for part of the cargo in time
- ✓ Carefully plan the transfer of the pallets without incurring airport storage charges



Loading the pallets onto the B747 aircraft

To top it off, at Clark Airport, the unit loading devices (ULDs) used for securely packing the goods were supposed to be ready at the airport; instead, they were on board the incoming flight. This meant the staff had only six hours to build and load 285 pallets onto the B747 aircraft before take-off. In Manila Metro, the team had only a four-hour window before the scheduled departure.



Securing the humanitarian aid shipments onboard the B747 airfreight charter

Everybody worked tirelessly. The Philippines team remained on-site, actively monitoring the situation every step of the way. In just 12 hours, the humanitarian goods were transferred from the warehouse, built up into 462 pallets in total, and securely positioned onto the B747 charter flight before takeoff to meet the urgent needs of the people in Myanmar. When a humanitarian crisis strikes, time, detailed planning, and effective execution are of the essence. This is how we work together across regions and capabilities to help those in need.



A total of 462 pallets of humanitarian aid were shipped to Yangon, Myanmar

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