



Operation Wallacea

Conservation research through academic partnerships

Medical and evacuation procedures for
Peru 2011

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1. Introduction

Medical questionnaire

All participants are required to complete a medical questionnaire prior to their departure. The forms are returned to the administrator at the UK, US or Canadian office. The original of these forms is sent out to the field and a copy passed to the medical coordinator in advance of the expeditions, so that any potential health problems or additions needed for the First Aid kit are identified. All volunteers and staff are asked to complete another medical form once they arrive in the country. There are two reasons for this; firstly medical conditions may have changed since the previous form was completed and secondly, this form provides the basis of the patients medical file. Completed medical forms are handed to the Medical Officer on the research ship who is ensuring that a summary of accidents and illnesses throughout the season is compiled.

Insurance

Operation Wallacea has purchased medical and evacuation insurance cover for all volunteers and staff to a value of £1 million per person. It is the responsibility of the Opwall Coordinator on site to liaise with the insurance company and ensure all the required documentation is submitted at the end of any evacuations completed.

Roles in the event of an Emergency

Carefully planned evacuation protocols are in place at the expedition sites in Peru. All staff will have training on the evacuation procedures and protocols.

Once a major incident leading to an evacuation is identified the Senior Scientist (Dr Rick Bodmer) will take overall control and will decide the level of emergency evacuation required for the patient. These should be classified as **Emergency or High Priority** (requiring the fastest possible transfer, usually by speedboat from Pacaya Samiria Reserve to Nauta and overland to Iquitos) or **Medium Priority** (requiring the patient to be moved as quickly as possible back to the research ship for treatment).

In all Emergency or High Priority case where a patient is being transferred to medical facilities they should be accompanied by the relevant Medical Officer or someone appointed by the medical officer as fit to accompany the patients. The absence of the Medical Officer from the site whilst the patient is accompanied to the hospital will require the suspension of all high risk activities at the site until the Medical Officer is back on site. In the case of a Medium Priority evacuation (eg transfer to a hospital for a confirmatory X-ray) another staff member other than the Medical Officer may be nominated to accompany the patient.

2. Medical facilities in country

Facilities in Nauta

There is a clinic in Nauta with a doctor where patients that cannot be treated on the research ships or do not require emergency evacuation to the hospital in Iquitos can receive attention.

Facilities in Iquitos:

Clinica Ana Stahl

Address: Ave La Marina, 285 Iquitos

Tel: +51 (065) 252-535, +51 (065) 252-528

Fax: +51 (065) 252-524

Web site www.caas-peru.org/QS.html

Director: Dr Fidy Barragnon Munoz

This is the best private hospital in Iquitos with a large group of leading specialists capable of carrying out a wide range of major surgery and procedures. Facilities include operating theatres, X-ray, body scanner and magnetic resonance equipment, laboratories, a diagnostic centre etc. This hospital is likely to provide suitable facilities for most emergencies.

Facilities on the research ships

There is a qualified and experienced expedition nurse on each of the groups of research ships and extensive medical supplies to treat most common conditions.

Evacuation Facilities

In the event of an emergency priority evacuation where the patient could not be evacuated by speedboat (preferred route) and a float plane was needed, the company used would be

Aviacion Alas del Oriente.

Manager and Pilot: Jorge Pinedo Lozano

Tel: 00-51-65-23-6005

Cel: 00-51-65-965-610013

E-mail: alasoniente@hotmail.com

3. Medical cover at each site

The projects in 2011 are run from research boats in the Pacaya Samiria Reserve. The research boats will be in clusters of two or more boats at each site and there will be a nurse on board one of the boats in each cluster. When the groups are travelling between Nauta and Pacaya Samiria one of the nurses will accompany the boats and one nurse will accompany the groups remaining on site. The nurses have well stocked medical clinics on their boats.

4. Evacuation procedures

Once a High Priority or Emergency evacuation is called then the Senior Scientist takes control of the situation. Speedboats would be despatched from the research ships to meet with the patient and would then travel downriver to Nauta (2.5 hours from the mouth of the Samiria). In the worst case scenario a patient would require evacuation from one of the transects at Huisto and this would require an additional 2 hours downriver to the mouth of the Samiria plus the time to carry out the patient by stretcher (approx 1 hour).

Once the boats were despatched the Senior Scientist would call the hospital in Iquitos and ensure an ambulance met the returning speedboats at Nauta. It would then be a 2 hour transfer by ambulance to Nauta. The Senior Scientist should also contact the Opwall contracted insurance company 24 hour contact number to explain the situation and obtain the necessary approvals for the evacuation. In addition he is responsible for informing the Project Director for Operation Wallacea that there is an ongoing emergency and the contact person given by the patient on their personal details form of the actions being taken and the state of the patient. He is also responsible for ensuring that all relevant Peruvian staff are aware of the ongoing emergency and follow up actions.

5. Reporting and Logging

During evacuations it is crucial that a log is kept by the Peru Country Manager detailing times, personnel involved and all relevant details of each step of the evacuation process.

A full safety assessment must be carried out after all evacuations and if a similar incident is likely all activities must be stopped until the situation has been rectified.

The Peru Country Manager will collate the reports of all medical treatment and evacuations and will submit the final report to the UK office. The Peru Project Manager will also submit the costs and report to the insurance company for re-imburement of costs.

6. Mass Evacuations and Disaster Management

There is the possibility, albeit incredibly small, that a large scale incident could occur which would require a large number of Operation Wallacea volunteers and staff being repatriated. Such incidents could include political unrest, natural disaster and terrorist attacks. These incidents can be broken into two types, those with prior warning and those without.

Major incident with prior warning

Some major incidents come with a degree of prior warning. A good example of this is political unrest resulting in violence, which would have a build-up period. We constantly monitor the political situation of the area we work in and if our experienced field operatives decide that the political situation has become unsafe they would order a full evacuation.

In such an incident the Peru Project Manager would liaise with the insurance company and relevant embassies to agree the best route for repatriation.

Major incident with no prior warning

Some incidents, such as a terrorist attack or natural disaster, would have no prior warning. In cases such as these the field staff would get all volunteers and staff to a place they deemed safe by which ever means they decide best. From here the Peru Project Manager would contact the volunteers' embassies to coordinate an evacuation strategy. The details of such an evacuation would vary dramatically depending on the situation and as such it is impossible to produce more detailed procedures than this.

7. List of Contact Numbers

All participants will be emailed a full up-to-date list of contacts prior to the start of the expedition. All contact details will also be available on the website.