

FLYING FOR LIFE



THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF MAF IN AUSTRALIA



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Spring 2026

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Welcome from the CEO

Welcome to our latest global magazine.



One of the greatest privileges of my role is getting to see up close how God works through MAF to bring lasting change to isolated communities. In this edition, you will read about His faithfulness in some of the most challenging situations – from rapid disaster relief in Bougainville, Arnhem Land and Madagascar, to delivering difficult, yet vital humanitarian aid to areas near conflict-affected places like Sudan.

Partners in action

Closer to home, we have seen that same spirit of partnership. Thanks to the incredible response of the Australian MAF community to our *End the Wait* appeal, we have fully funded the refurbishment of two vital aircraft and provided three months of life-saving medevac flights in Timor-Leste.

Your support is making a tangible difference where it is needed most.

Welcoming the next generation

Looking to the future, I am thrilled to launch our new Co-Pilot program (see opposite page). Our young adults represent the longer term future of MAF and we are passionate about inspiring and equipping them to get involved in MAF's mission now.

If you have a young person in your family, church, college or community who might be interested (or you yourself), please share this exciting new initiative with them. I look forward to reporting back in future editions how our younger generation is stepping up to support God's work.

Trusting God

Recently, I have been reflecting on the feeding of the 5,000 in John 6. Faced with a massive, hungry crowd, a boy offered all he had, just five loaves and two fish. It was a tiny contribution for such a huge need, but Jesus took it, blessed it, and fed thousands, with twelve baskets left over.

When I look at the immense needs of isolated communities worldwide, it is easy to wonder how MAF can possibly do enough. But this story reminds me that Jesus doesn't ask us to solve everything on our own. Our role is to listen to His voice and offer what we have, trusting Him to multiply our efforts to make a lasting difference.

That is why we have launched the Flying the Gospel Fund, fuelling flights for church leaders, missionaries, and evangelists to take the Gospel to remote communities cut off from help.

Thank you for standing with us through your prayers, your volunteering, and your giving. Together, we are ensuring that the love of Jesus reaches the ends of the earth, one flight at a time.

In Christ,



Chris Barnes
CEO, MAF in Australia

Image above: MAF cyclone response in Arnhem Land.



Be part of something bigger

Co-Pilot is a brand new community for 16-25 year olds who care about Christian mission, humanitarian aid, and aviation.

Connect with a national network of young adults who want to explore how they can bring help, hope, and healing to isolated communities through MAF.

Join Co-Pilot

Scan the QR code to get started: maf.org.au/copilot



Choose your path



Volunteer

Use your unique skills, gifts and time to support MAF's mission and connect with other volunteers.



Fundraise

Turn your passions into vital support for remote communities through fundraising, events and creative projects.



Careers

Explore aviation, engineering, mission and support roles pathways, and connect with MAF field staff.

Within Co-Pilot, you'll find a national Discord community, social events, game nights, Q&As with MAF pilots and staff, and inspiring mission stories.

For such a time as this

MAF International CEO Donovan Palmer reflects on God's timing, explaining how our global structure has positioned us to respond effectively to the heartbreak of the Sudan conflict.



Supplies being unloaded from the MAF aircraft in Renk, South Sudan.

📍 Sudan

Nearly two years ago, leaders from the MAF family made a bold, unanimous decision to unite our operational programs and fundraising groups like never before. In this once-in-a-generation moment, we believe God is creating a space for new beginnings.

Reflecting on what God has been doing, I think of Mordecai's words to Esther in chapter 4, verse 14: "perhaps you have come to your royal position for such a time as this."

While we have been integrating, a desperate situation of historic proportions is unfolding in the Sudan Crisis Arc. The conflict has forcibly

displaced 12 million people - more than half of whom are children. With global aid cuts, the situation shows little sign of easing.

Returning to our roots

This crisis unfolds in the heartland of one of MAF's birthplaces. Marking our 80th anniversary, we recall pioneers like Stuart King and Jack Hemmings, who initiated our work in East Africa. This season is not just about what we should do, but about who we are.

Reforms we have made enable us to develop regional, harmonised interventions, mobilise resources worldwide, and speak with a unified voice.

In short, we are globally united and locally powered, a commitment that shines through as we strengthen the local community leaders we serve.

Yet, organisational reforms are only tools. Our driving force must always be the heart of Christ. In Matthew 9:36, Jesus looked at the crowds with deep compassion because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Before we analyse or mobilise, we must allow our hearts to be broken. These are not statistics; they are mothers, fathers, and children.

A united regional response

With the love of God in our hearts, our symbolic Sudan Response Collective brings together our East African teams in Chad, South Sudan, Uganda, and our Resource Hub in Kenya, in a grassroots, multi-disciplinary effort. Together, we will establish remote bases, expand our capabilities, and when the time is right, bring MAF's presence into Sudan itself.

These new beginnings are also stirring in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville (see page 10). As we step forward, we rely on God's miraculous provision to bring life to more cut-off communities.

Pray



Praise God for guiding MAF's global structure. Pray for protection for our East African teams, comfort for displaced families, and the miraculous provision to reach cut-off communities.

Picture top right: John Feil and Joost Gerritsen with the Cessna Caravan.



Flying urgent medical aid to Chad

📍 Chad

As the war in Sudan spills across the border, drone strikes have left many wounded and Chad's health system stretched to its limit. MAF responded by flying urgent medical cargo to eastern Chad, where thousands of refugees seek safety.

Security in the Tiné region near Chad's eastern border has deteriorated rapidly. Following a day when a local hospital received over 100 wounded people, MAF received an urgent plea for surgical kits and essential medicines "as early as tomorrow". "Road transport takes five days," explained MAF's John Feil. "This required an immediate response."

The team quickly stripped a Cessna Caravan's seats to fill every inch of space with cargo. Over three flights, MAF delivered vital supplies, including a mobile operating theatre to treat major trauma, bypassing a gruelling 1,000km overland journey from N'Djamena.

Chad Country Director, Esmara Gaalswijk, was humbled to help. "It was amazing to see how we could fill the Caravan with these much-needed medical supplies," she said. "We are grateful we could contribute to this ongoing crisis." A representative from the humanitarian organisation running the hospital agreed: "I've never had such a quick response on our urgent cargo. It is a big win for our team in Tiné."

Stories by Annet Nabbanja.

Light in Paradise

For generations, the isolated Carteret Islands of Papua New Guinea have struggled in near-total darkness, cut off from essential medical care and communication. Now, a critical MAF project has brought life-saving solar lighting, emergency radio contact, and spiritual hope to this remote island community.



The successful installation of solar lighting at the clinic is revealed as the lights shine brightly at night. Image right: The shores of remote Han Island.



📍 Papua New Guinea

The Carteret Islands look like paradise, with white beaches, palm trees and beautiful lagoons. But behind that beauty lies a hard truth. This atoll of six tiny coral islands, about 100 kilometres from Bougainville, is cut off from almost everything. There is no coastguard, no mobile phone signal, and no ambulance. The only access is by small open boat, across four hours of rough, open sea.

Karlos Wilkinson-Sarunic, soon to be serving with MAF in Bougainville, experienced this isolation firsthand while on a short visit to one of the islands to help install the new solar lighting system. "At night, in the bathroom at the back where there's a toilet and shower, there was no light," Karlos recalls. "It's pitch black."

This absolute darkness only magnifies how vulnerable the islanders are when an emergency strikes. "Normally, if something goes wrong whilst you're camping back home, you can just drive off," Karlos explains. "But the people on the Carteret Islands had no backup, and no way to escape or get help."

No way to call

At the local health clinic, Head Nurse Bernice Kumis knows that reality all too well. For years, she and her team cared for over 2,000 people without reliable communication. If a patient became seriously ill or needed emergency evacuation to the hospital on the main island, Bernice could not call for a doctor or a boat. In those moments, paradise felt like a dark, lonely place, completely cut off from help.

Big change

"This is a big change!" says fellow nurse Ann Sari. That change came when MAF Technologies installed a high-frequency (HF) radio system at the clinic. For the first time, the medical team can contact staff in Buka, on the main island.

They can ask questions, get second opinions, order supplies, and call for emergency evacuations. After years of silence, their voices can finally travel across the sea.

Bright lights, safer care

Next came the power. The MAF team installed solar panels and electric lighting in the clinic. As the lights came on, villagers gathered outside in amazement. "Now we can see the city lights around the hospital," says resident Louisa Kumis. "What we normally see in town, we now have on the island!"

For Bernice, these lights mean safer care. "For two years, I've been using the torch for the mothers when they are in labour and give birth," she says. "For me, it's something that I really feel embarrassed about, because when you use only the torch, you can pick a wrong thing in the dark."

Today, the maternity ward has proper lighting. Thanks to high-quality 240-volt outlets, the clinic can run a plug-in steriliser and basic medical equipment, opening the door for life-saving devices like oxygen concentrators.

Karlos is passionate about ensuring MAF's work goes beyond quick fixes. "We are not going in, ticking a box and leaving," he says. "We put meticulous attention into the safety and sustainability of what is being installed. We don't just slap panels on a roof."

Spiritual light

Alongside the solar panels and radio equipment, spiritual light arrived too: 100 bilingual New Testaments and 100 solar-powered audio Bibles. "Until then," Bernice says, "there was only one Bible on the entire island."



The community received them with joy. "Plenty of people don't know how to read and write," Bernice explains. "So, the audio Bible is really useful to them. Thank you! You're building the spiritual side of our people." Children were soon listening and singing along, and the next day, the Bibles were used during Sunday worship.

No longer forgotten

The Carteret Islands are still remote. The sea is still wide. The journey is still difficult. But something has changed. A nurse can call for help. A mother can give birth in the light. A community can hear God's Word in its own language. On an island that once felt forgotten, light now shines.

Story by Matt Painter.

Become a Partner



Karlos and Caitlin Wilkinson-Sarunic will soon be on the ground in Bougainville, playing a vital role in technology and community projects like this one. Will you consider sponsoring Karlos and Caitlin?



Image above left: Nason Lukio, Lead Technician, installs a solar panel. Image above right: Envoy 2 Ember light audio Bibles donated to locals at Han Island.

Tanzania transformed: MAF begins a new chapter

Later this year, after more than six decades of service, MAF is preparing to hand over operations in Tanzania to a flourishing local network. As regional infrastructure and services have expanded, this transition reflects the country's significant development and allows MAF to pivot resources to urgent crises elsewhere.



📍 Tanzania

Tanzania is in far better shape today than when MAF first arrived. Having scaled back operations in 2014 as demand shifted, MAF is now taking the final step in this planned handover.

Four decades of physical healing

For over 40 years, MAF's mobile medical clinics have treated thousands of women and children in remote areas, saving untold lives. Every month, MAF has partnered with Haydom, Kilimatinde and Same Hospitals, flying health professionals and supplies to communities with little access to healthcare.

Each outreach provided vaccinations, antenatal check-ups, malaria prevention, and essential health advice. Miriam and her baby are among the many who benefitted. "I'm happy to know that my child's health is progressing well. Her weight is 8.9kg – a huge difference from last month when she was only 7.4kg! Everyone needs medical services," says Miriam.

From Haydom Hospital, it takes the medical team only 15 minutes by air to reach regional villages, compared to hours by road. For patients in need of urgent emergency care, MAF's medevacs have been a lifesaver.

A legacy of spiritual growth

The legacy is just as profound spiritually. Maasai evangelist Elisha Moita, founder of Malambo Bible College, remembers when he began sharing the Gospel in the late 1970s. He counted just 63 Christians amongst the Maasai. Today, there are around 200,000 Maasai Christians (Joshua Project).

For over 40 years, Elisha and his team of evangelists flew with MAF every month to reach isolated Maasai villages, bypassing gruelling dirt tracks.

"Some villages were so remote, but with MAF, our evangelists reached people more easily without too much energy, and preached the Gospel. Before, walking so many hours was difficult. With MAF, we had the strength to sit and talk to people because we weren't tired," Elisha recalls.

Pivoting to greater need

Now that local access to essential services has grown, MAF is pivoting its resources to support the refugee crisis in Sudan. Since the Sudan War erupted in April 2023, more than 12 million people have been displaced (UNHCR). Over 1.3 million Sudanese have fled to Chad, and another 600,000 have crossed into South Sudan, two countries where MAF already operates.

Norman Baker, MAF International's Chief Operating Officer, explains: "We have established a strong case for focusing our operations in South Sudan and Chad to address the world's biggest humanitarian crisis as a strategic organisational priority."

Looking forward

MAF is currently working with partners on the handover of local ministries, so that medical care continues to reach those in need. It is thanks to the years of investment from supporters like you, that these remote communities are now more accessible and strong enough to take this step forward. Please pray for MAF's legacy to bear fruit in Tanzania, and for God's guidance in our support for refugees in South Sudan and Chad.

Story by Claire Gilderson.

Tanzania: A changed nation



Life expectancy rose from 44 years in 1963, to 70 years in 2026.

(World Bank)



Maternal mortality reduced by 71% in last 25 years.

(World Bank)



Primary school enrolment is now at 93% since free basic education was introduced in 2015.

(The Global Economy)



Rural electrification has reached 69%, backed by a US\$965 million government investment.

(International Trade Admission and Global Highways)

When cyclones strike, MAF responds

From Madagascar to Arnhem Land in Australia and Bougainville in Papua New Guinea, MAF has been responding when extreme weather events have left communities isolated and in need.

Rapid response in Bougainville: Cyclone Maila

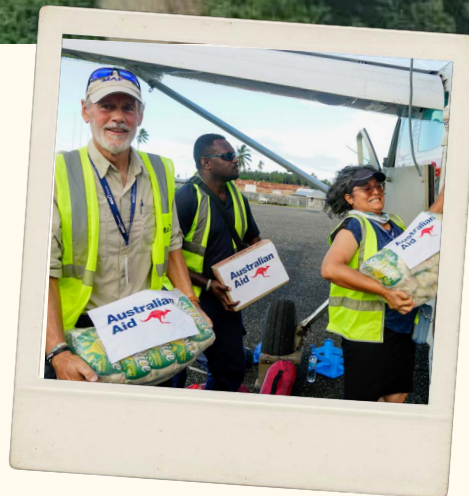
📍 Papua New Guinea

In the wake of Tropical Cyclone Maila, the Autonomous Region of Bougainville faced severe flooding, destroyed food gardens and washed-out roads, leaving remote communities completely isolated.

"The effect of the cyclone is very bad and has caused damage to nearly all of Bougainville," said Rev Abraham Toroi, Bishop Emeritus of the United Church in Bougainville. "Bridges have been washed out, causing no travel at this time and many people became stranded."

Having only recently returned to Bougainville, the newly established MAF team responded rapidly to the emergency.

Over a three-week crisis operation, MAF flew 77 flights, carrying nearly 300 passengers and 17 tonnes of humanitarian cargo.



MAF's John Woodberry said the team flew food, medical supplies and aid to isolated airstrips in Nissan Island, Buin and Arawa, alongside conducting medical evacuations and aerial damage assessments.

Supported by funding and aid supplies from the Australian and New Zealand governments, MAF bypassed washed-out bridges to deliver relief directly where it was needed. "Basically, we were there to serve and help in any way we could," John said.

Story by Aquila Matit.

Ramazon Bridge in Bougainville, damaged from heavy floods because of Cyclone Maila.

Image above: MAF delivers food and hygiene supplies provided by the Australian government to Buin in Bougainville.



Supporting recovery: Cyclone Gezani

📍 Madagascar

Cyclone Gezani devastated Toamasina on Madagascar's east coast, flattening homes and severely damaging local infrastructure. To aid the response, MAF flew in emergency teams from Medair, a Christian humanitarian partner organisation.

"Travel by road isn't an option in this kind of emergency," said Rajaonirina Keng Laricha, Medair Communications Officer. "We've been working with MAF for years. As Christian organisations, we want to reach those who are hardest to reach, and MAF makes that easier."

Over six weeks, Medair distributed hygiene kits, household items and cash assistance. In Toamasina alone, 23,847 households were declared disaster areas and thousands were forced to abandon their homes. "My house collapsed completely, so we moved uphill to another shelter but that one collapsed too," said cyclone survivor Flogèle Bruchard. "We kept moving from one house to another, four times in total, and each one fell."

By enabling rapid travel in and out of the disaster zone, MAF allowed the Medair teams to focus entirely on helping families rebuild their homes and lives.

Story by Antsatiana Gino Randrianasolo.

Image above: Nearly 80% of the key port city of Toamasina in Madagascar was destroyed, leaving families, churches and hospitals in urgent need. Image right: MAF cyclone response in Arnhem Land.

Evacuations and food relief: Cyclone Narelle

📍 Arnhem Land

When Tropical Cyclone Narelle made landfall in Arnhem Land in Australia's Northern Territory earlier this year, MAF planes evacuated more than 70 Yolŋu residents from remote homelands to safety in Nhulunbuy. Their homes lie within the Laynhapuy Homelands, a group of small, remote Yolŋu communities scattered across 30,000 square kilometres of East Arnhem Land.

Once the storm passed, residents returned home, but flooded tracks and depleted supplies quickly triggered a second crisis. With several homelands running out of food, MAF mobilised five planes over three days, flying 1.7 tonnes of emergency rations to communities completely cut off by road.

With overland routes entirely flooded, air transport was the only way to deliver these essential supplies.

"MAF flew the food out to these homelands over a couple of weeks and helped distribute it on the ground," said Ashleigh Ayres from the Laynhapuy Homelands Aboriginal Corporation.

Story by Janne Rytönen.

Stories edited by Eleanor Rivers.



Give a gift of lasting change



*Women and children wait to be seen by medics in Chidudu, Tanzania.
Image top: A baby gets vaccinated during a Mahaka medical outreach.*

📍 Global

Our names and achievements may fade, but we can leave an enduring legacy. Through giving to MAF, you can provide vital help to families who may never know your name, but whose lives are transformed because help arrives just in time.

Many plan to leave this quiet impact through a Gift in their Will, and we are so grateful. Did you know that you don't have to wait to set this legacy in motion? Giving a portion of your future gift now allows you to witness the joy of your generosity firsthand, seeing isolated lives transformed in your lifetime while meeting urgent, immediate needs today.

Whether you choose to give now as a lifeline, or later as a lasting blessing, your legacy brings hope to isolated communities.

Leave a legacy



Find out how you can leave a Gift in your Will, or launch a lifeline today.



Contact Mike on 0405 022 478
or email partner@maf.org.au

The joy of church partnership

Partnerships with local churches are essential in helping MAF bring life-changing hope to isolated communities.

Recently, Sawtell Anglican Church beautifully demonstrated just one of the many ways congregations can partner with MAF by hosting a special luncheon. Using our 'Fuel Good Morning Tea' resources, they brought their community together to raise support and awareness for remote aviation.

The event featured our documentary, *Ends of the Earth*, showcasing the unique challenges and rewards of serving remote communities through aviation.

"It was a joy to witness the love shared between MAF staff and the communities they visit," says Pastor Heather Gray.

"Praise God that MAF is making it possible for isolated areas to access services we take for granted."

We are deeply grateful for Sawtell Anglican and every church partnering with us to make life-changing flights possible.

Partner with us



Find out more about our church partnership opportunities:
maf.org.au/church



Volunteers make it possible

Play a part in our vital mission as a volunteer.

Every day, MAF flights bring aid to some of the world's most remote places. From emergency medical evacuations and disaster response to supporting education, healthcare and local churches, MAF exists to reach people others can't.

But behind every MAF flight is a crew of people making it possible. Not just team members, but also many volunteers. From welcoming guests at an event, sharing about MAF in your church, praying faithfully, helping out in the Sydney office or supporting fundraising activities, a volunteer's contribution is part of a much bigger story.

We're always looking for passionate individuals to step into specific volunteer roles that help further MAF's impact around the world.

Volunteer



Learn more and register your interest today:
maf.org.au/volunteer



Be a part of something bigger

Karlos and Caitlin Wilkinson-Sarunic will soon be serving in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, one of the most isolated regions in the world. But they cannot do this vital work alone.



📍 Bougainville

As the IT Manager for MAF Technologies, Karlos will lead local teams to install life-saving communications, solar power and clean energy in remote communities like the Carteret Islands (read more on pages 10-11). Meanwhile, Caitlin will use her marine science background to support local conservation and sustainable ocean development.

They believe God has been preparing them for this season over many years, shaping their skills, opening doors, and a love for people in remote places.

Karlos and Caitlin continue to build a faithful team of ongoing ministry partners. Your prayerful and financial support will help keep them serving, empowering isolated communities and bringing lasting hope to the Pacific.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."
— **Jeremiah 29:11**

Embark with MAF

Is God calling you to use your skills to make a lasting impact with MAF?

Current Vacancies:

Management

- General Manager, Bougainville (NEW!)
- Corporate Services Manager, PNG
- Finance Manager, PNG

Pilots

- Experienced Mission Pilot, Bougainville
- Mission Pilot - Float Plane, PNG

Engineering

- Licenced Aircraft Maintenance Engineer, PNG

Start the conversation today: maf.org.au/work-with-us



Adopt a Mission



Would you prayerfully consider partnering with Karlos and Caitlin? Scan the QR to find out more and sponsor their program.





Help Fly the Gospel Further



Every person deserves the opportunity to hear the message of hope in Jesus! But for millions of people living in some of the world's most isolated communities, geography remains one of the greatest barriers to the Gospel.

Mission Aviation Fellowship in Australia are launching our new ***Flying the Gospel Fund*** to specifically support evangelism, church planting, Bible distribution, and discipleship training in some of the most remote and isolated communities around the world.

We greatly value your partnership in this vital aspect of our ministry. Please pray that God will raise faithful, generous supporters who will give sacrificially to advance His Kingdom and fulfill His Great Commission through the work of MAF.

We invite you to prayerfully consider partnering financially with our new ***Flying the Gospel Fund***.**

"How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"
– Romans 10:15b

Scan to give or visit: maf.org.au/flying-the-gospel-further



**Gifts to the *Flying the Gospel Fund* are non-tax deductible.

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Fuel Life-Changing Flights

Rising fuel costs are threatening our ability to fly. This year, fuel expenses are projected to exceed our budget by up to AU\$1 million, leaving a critical shortfall in our Fuel Fund.

Without these flights, isolated communities are cut off from:



**Urgent
medical care**



**Practical
relief**



**Spiritual
hope**

**Be the reason help arrives.
Donate fuel for life-saving flights:
maf.org.au/fuel-fund**



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