

# PAUL & CATHY UPDATE 26<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2008

"It's a go", crackled the voice on the telephone.

These were words that meant we could spring into action but three 'o' clock in the afternoon was now a bit late in the day.

We had been advised of the possibility of doing a medevac at midday and had got ourselves and the plane ready. The patient had been admitted to hospital and the doctors had suspected meningitis or cerebral malaria, either of which could lead to death within a day or two if immediate treatment wasn't given. But the patient was more than half way back to the equator from where we were and getting to them that day was now out of the question. Pemba is on the very north coast of Mozambique more than a thousand miles from Mercy Air and even in a plane that does over 170 mph, it was going to be a long way.

We have friends a third of the way up in Beira and a quick phone call secured us a lift from the airport and a bed for the night - we were very grateful. We arrived after dark and were up again before dawn to continue up to Pemba. The patient in question was actually a friend of ours from previous mission trips and had asked Cathy to come along to monitor him during the flight. In a way it was good to see him again although not quite under these circumstances. After airport paperwork and waiting for the patient to arrive from the hospital we back in the air and on our way home, this time loaded up with his wife and two kids, one of which was just nine months old.



There's not much you can say about seven hours of flying at 10,000ft, and the haze from the bush fires meant that the view was only slightly more interesting than the hour and a half of dark after the sun went down.

We landed safely in South Africa last night just after 19:00 and they rang us this morning to say that he had been kept in hospital till two in the morning after extensive tests. So far things are looking good but they will stay here for at least the next week for observation and treatment if necessary.

So, it was another of those occasions where your whole day is changed by a single phone call. We were privileged to be the ones who were able to practically offer assistance but without the prayers and support of people like yourselves, we or Mercy Air would not be in that position.

Thank you.

Paul and Cathy