



BILLY SLATER
STORM
RELIEF
APPEAL

4 April 2006

Media release

Melbourne Storm's Billy Slater launches personal cyclone relief appeal

With parents who live in Innisfail and personal ties to the area, Melbourne Storm full-back and Queensland State of Origin representative, Billy Slater today launched his own appeal to raise money for people devastated by Cyclone Larry.

Flanked by appeal supporters at the launch Billy said, "Being raised in Innisfail and getting my start in Rugby League there, I feel I have a commitment to the area that is best expressed in a personal appeal to raise as much money as I can for those who have suffered at the hands of Cyclone Larry.

"Already I have leadership donations committed to my appeal from the Australian Banana Promotions Company, Medibank Private and Melbourne Storm.

"Their support sends a strong message that there are organisations and fellow Australians who want to help. I am deeply grateful for this support.

"Because the Cyclone stuck in the middle of the Commonwealth Games, its real impact has not been on the radar of many Australians.

"I was in Innisfail last weekend visiting my parents. The destruction caused by Larry has to be seen to be believed. There is very little that is still standing.

"People have no homes and nowhere to go. Many are still without power, clean water, sewerage, communications and food.

"The rest of Australia needs to know just how bad it really is up there and how desperate residents are for help. I hope that this appeal will work towards restoring some of what they lost and make their lives a little more comfortable," Billy said.

Organisations supporting Billy's appeal have been strong in their endorsement of his initiative.

Medibank Private today announced it is donating \$10,000 to the appeal, as is Melbourne Storm.

The Australian Banana Promotions Company is also committed to making a leadership gift to the appeal, but is yet to announce their contribution.

"All Australian's have been touched by the tragedy that has unfolded in far North Queensland," said Melbourne Storm CEO Brian Waldron.

"Billy's willingness to support this appeal is a terrific gesture and we are thrilled to have the opportunity to help in the way we have."





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CEO of the Australian Banana Promotions Company, Craig Allen said, "Innisfail and Tully account for around 90 percent of Australia's banana production, and Cyclone Larry has all but wiped out the crop that would supply our markets for the next six months.

"As a result, many growers and people who rely on the banana industry in the area have been horribly affected by this disaster and the rest of the banana industry is throwing its weight behind Billy to support our colleagues in the area.

Simon Blair, Medibank Private Chief Operating Officer, said, "We're privileged to support the Appeal, and it's important at times like this we work together to do what we can to assist the wellbeing of the people affected.

"As a major partner of Melbourne Storm and having worked closely with Billy, we are delighted to be involved."

The Salvation Army has offered to be the collection charity for the Billy Slater Storm Relief Appeal and donations can be made by calling their hotline on 13SALVOS (137258) or via their special Salvation Army website www.salvos.org.au/billyslater.

Soon after Tropical Cyclone Larry tore through parts of Far North Queensland, The Salvation Army Emergency Service (SAES) teams were on the scene providing a vital service in the township of Innisfail. Four SAES teams fed local people and emergency service personnel involved in the clean up around the town, which is The Salvation Army's main responsibility under the Government's Disaster Management Plan.

Captain Peter Sutcliffe, Public Relations Secretary for The Salvation Army in Central and North Queensland said. "The relief work of The Salvation Army in the region will continue as long as needed. With the relief effort well underway, The Salvation Army is working closely with all government and community organisations involved in the recovery process to ensure an organised approach to help the affected communities."

As the nominated recipient charity for the Billy Slater Storm Relief Appeal, The Salvation Army is able to accept and receipt cheque and credit card donations. Cheques should be made payable to The Salvation Army Disaster Relief Fund and posted to The Billy Slater Storm Relief Appeal, C/- The Salvation Army, GPO Box 9888 in your capital city.

Anyone wishing to make a cash donation should do so through the Cyclone Larry Relief Appeal at any branch of a major bank.

For further information, please contact:

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