

*Pioneer Bible Translators (PBT) testimony of need*

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**Subject: Bible Translation, multi-language program**

Below is a short document I wrote up for you based on some past transportation issues. Just today however, the airline sent the flight to Ambae 5 hours early causing our two interns and Matt not to make their trip out of there. Needless to say the plane departed without them. They are stuck with no idea when a flight may return. Shortly after the airline called us at noon to ...

let us know that they were cancelling my family's flight to Pentecost on Monday for our 3 week village follow up work. They don't know when the flight will reschedule. So much frustration here!

-Craig

**Summary of need for safe, reliable marine transport**

Pioneer Bible Translators is currently working in northern Vanuatu to meet the Bible translation needs of 4 languages on the islands of Pentecost and Ambae. To meet these needs, we are training nationals from each location to translate the Bible into their own languages.

This process requires coordinating the transportation of the local translators to a central location here at the Luganville training facility from these islands and numerous villages throughout. Just as important to this process is sending expatriate missionaries to their villages for consultant checks of their translation work and to facilitate the use of the translated Scripture in the village.

In the future, we want to be able to train local volunteers from more languages located on additional islands. However, as the situation currently stands, timely transportation is a major challenge to our ministry. There are local cargo ships and airplanes that, at times, go to and from some of the locations we are trying reach. These have often proven unreliable and costly, stranding our teams and participants, costing us 2-3x more money than had been budgeted for transportation. Most confounding, our staff and trainees are regularly stranded for a couple weeks to a month on the islands waiting for us to sort out the transportation.

Here are some actual examples; the overcrowded small ships will frequently observe one day of rough seas and decide to turn south for 2-3 weeks, disrupting our schedule and leaving us scrambling to find alternatives — even if the sea was just fine the very next day. The local airline will often over-book their passengers and then send our translators back to their village on the day that we paid for them to fly. Other times the airline just decides not to make the flight to the outer islands for weeks at a time, because they have ‘too many’ open seats or for other undisclosed reasons.

These local translators do not generally live close to the island airstrips, so we have to pay hundreds of dollars just to get them to and from the village by a local truck (which is a whole

other problem with reliability and risk). At times, that portion of transit costs double or triple if they have to go and come back because they were turned away from their flight. Besides, many islands do not have reasonable airstrips to accommodate an aircraft. On multiple occasions, our translator participants just do not make it to the program causing 6 months loss of time, adding years to a single translation project.

Access to a safe missionary boat transportation service would alleviate these challenges as well as open up other ministry opportunities for us. A boat that could quickly and cost-effectively go straight to/from the villages of our translators would save us both time and resources. As it currently stands, we cannot travel to the outer islands unless we are willing to spend weeks stranded there.

In summary, to be effective we need a dedicated maritime mission transportation program.

And my God will fully supply your every need... Philippians 4:19



the Bennett Family, Director, PBT, Vanuatu



In Class discussions, Luganville



Receiving some Scripture in language



Dreams going to training.

3 of the 9 translators on board Sweet