

24 March 2004

TSR Feeds Live Storm Warnings to Reuters AlertNet

London, 24 March 2004 - Emergency relief charities can now receive advance warning of storm-related emergencies thanks to a new partnership between Reuters AlertNet, the humanitarian news portal, and Tropical Storm Risk (TSR), the leading resource for forecasting tropical storms worldwide.

Reuters AlertNet (www.alertnet.org) will now provide TSR's real-time alerts for all active tropical storm systems (hurricanes, typhoons, cyclones) threatening landfall anywhere in the world. Using clear graphics and text, these alerts give the storm's predicted landfall time, landfall position and landfall strength, together with warnings of potential property damage and flooding. The service provides alerts with up to five days lead time and is designed particularly to meet the needs of humanitarian relief planners.

"The integration of TSR's data will allow Reuters AlertNet to provide automatic updates on the latest storm emergencies thereby helping emergency relief charities plan their emergency response when storms target populated areas," said Mark Jones, Editor of Reuters AlertNet.

Tropical Storm Risk (TSR) is a forecasting venture comprising experts on insurance, risk management and seasonal climate forecasting led by the Benfield Hazard Research Centre at University College London. The storm forecasts are sent through a live feed from TSR's Tropical Storm Tracker (www.tropicalstormrisk.com) and are updated every 6-12 hours to provide the latest available information on storm systems worldwide.

"We are delighted to provide this new warning service to the international disaster relief community" said Dr. Mark Saunders, Head of Seasonal Forecasting & Meteorological Hazards at the Benfield Hazard Research Centre. "Early access to clear and accurate information can save lives and minimise the hardship and suffering caused by damaging and deadly weather systems."

Each year between 40 and 50 hurricane strength events occur worldwide. Nine of the 40 worst catastrophes in terms of victims 1970-2002 and 17 of the 40 most costly insurance losses 1970-2002 were due to tropical storms.

Reuters AlertNet provides round-the-clock news and information on humanitarian emergencies for the international disaster relief community. The TSR forecasts are the first in a series of new services designed to meet emergency relief charities' need for help with early warning and mapping intelligence.

-ENDS-

For further information please contact:

Yasmeen Khan
Reuters media relations
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7542 0496
Yasmeen.khan@reuters.com

Mark Saunders
Lead Scientist, TSR Consortium, Benfield Hazard Research Centre
Tel: +44 (0) 1483 204187
mas@mssl.ucl.ac.uk

Chris Gatland/David Bogg
Benfield
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7578 7485/+44 (0) 20 7522 4016
Chris.gatland@benfieldgroup.com
David.bogg@benfieldgroup.com

Ansi Vallens
Signals & Strategies
New York
Tel: +1 518 392 4238
ansisvallens@taconic.net

Notes to Editors:

About Reuters AlertNet:

Reuters AlertNet (www.alertnet.org), the news and communications service for humanitarian relief charities has more than 200 emergency relief charity members from 48 countries. The website attracts up to a million unique visitors a month. AlertNet is run by Reuters Foundation which is a charitable trust funded by Reuters, the global information company.

About Tropical Storm Risk (TSR):

Founded in 2000, Tropical Storm Risk (TSR) offers a leading resource for forecasting the risk from tropical storms worldwide. The venture provides innovative forecast products to increase risk awareness and to help decision making within the (re)insurance industry, other business sectors, government and society. The TSR consortium is co-sponsored by Benfield, the leading independent reinsurance intermediary, Royal & Sun Alliance, the global insurance group, and Crawford & Company, a global claims management solutions company. The TSR scientific grouping brings together climate physicists, meteorologists and statisticians based at the Benfield Hazard Research Centre at University College London (UCL). www.tropicalstormrisk.com

About Benfield Hazard Research Centre:

Benfield Hazard Research Centre is sponsored by Benfield, the world's leading independent reinsurance intermediary and risk advisory business. Benfield's customers include many of the world's major insurance and reinsurance companies as well as Government entities and global corporations. Benfield employs over 1,700 people based in over 30 locations worldwide. www.benfieldgroup.com

With over forty researchers and practitioners, the Benfield Hazard Research Centre is Europe's leading multidisciplinary academic hazard research centre and comprises three groups: Geological Hazards, Meteorological Hazards and Seasonal Forecasting, and Disaster Studies and Management. The Centre is based at University College London, which along with Oxford and Cambridge, is one of the UK's top three multi-faculty teaching and research institutions. www.benfieldhrc.org