

Mr. D. Robertson  
Productivity Committee  
LB2 East Collins Street  
Melbourne 9003, VIC.  
Australia

Dear Mr. Robertson:

From a distance I have been following your Committee's deliberation, or lack thereof, for not recommending allowing the operation of Winlink 2000 in Australia. Because it is obvious that the authors of the draft report are not well versed in the topic, I thought that I should make this Submission to the Inquiry.

It's purely a local Australian issue whether the Government there still regards Australian amateur radio operators a risk to your national security. However, it is another matter when your Committee discounts the safety aspects of Winlink 2000. Australia is rather remote from the rest of the world. It has a large, what you call "outback" and it is surrounded by large oceans. I would have assumed that your Committee would not obstruct radio amateurs from providing a public service to those that might need it in an emergency either on land or for yachtsmen at sea.

As one of the many examples of Winlink 2000's contribution to emergency communications, I have attached a copy of a recent letter by John Kirckof of International Health Services. Winlink provided the primary means for relaying messages during the emergency relief services that IHS recently provided in Honduras. This included health and welfare messages as well as critical medical specialist consultation traffic when necessary. Australia and nearby Pacific nations could also be hit by earthquakes, hurricanes or volcanic eruptions and find themselves in need of similar life-saving communications. Unfortunately the current exclusion of Winlink 2000 from Australia could make supplying this on short notice unreliable and haphazard at best.

The letter speaks for itself. The developers and world-wide participating amateur operators of Winlink 2000 are proud to facilitate and participate in these important relief and humanitarian efforts. I hope that it might help serve as a wake-up call.

As a purely voluntary, non profit, and amateur organization Winlink 2000 (unlike some of the other organizations making submissions) has no financial interest or competitive reason whether Australia excludes operation of this valuable service. I feel however, it is in the best interest of Australia and her citizens not to follow an isolationist policy or yield to the pressure of commercial operations but allow its amateur radio operators to fully participate in the international amateur radio service.

Yours sincerely,

Rick Muething KN6KB  
6146 Anchor Lane  
Rockledge, FL 32955 USA

Attachment: Letter dated March 25, 2002 from International Health Service.

-----Original Message-----

**From:** John Kirckof [mailto:johnkitw@rea-alp.com]

**Sent:** Tuesday, March 26, 2002 8:09 AM

**To:** Rick Muething

**Subject:** Thank You from International Health Services

## International Health Service of Minnesota

P.O. Box 16149, Minneapolis, MN 55416  
952-920-0433 (telephone and fax)  
Web site: [www.IHSOFMN.ORG](http://www.IHSOFMN.ORG)

March 24, 2002

Rick Muething

Winlink Coordinator

Dear Rick,

Thank you for your many contributions to make our February mission such a success. Your personal attention to assist us directly contributed to the great success in the communications needs of International Health Service. This was one of the ways that enabled us to help the many people of Honduras who are in need. Most of our resources come from the many generous people who support us,

and all contributions go directly to the people of Honduras since we have no paid staff. So, your support with no strings attached truly helped us to pass messages along, some of great importance. My own example is one of several important uses of the WinLink system to get information to remote areas of Honduras.

After about 5 days into our 2 week mission, we were in our local village when my wife, Karen, received an e-mail message that her father was in the hospital. She was able to get to a location to make a telephone connection back in the U.S. That first e-mail message was so important to us! Karen immediately returned home to be with her father and mother. During the remainder of my time in the village, Karen e-mailed me several times on the status of her father's health. This example alone proves the value of the WinLink system in getting messages to where they are vitally needed.

The following information gives a small glimpse at the scope of our operation. One hundred and eight volunteers completed a two-week Medical Relief Project in Honduras on February. Volunteers consisted of 91 people from 17 states in the US, 1 person from Canada and 16 people from 4 different locations in Honduras. In addition to these were the local people at each of the villages that assisted the teams in crowd control, general help (carrying water, bagging vitamins, etc) and translation.

These volunteers were part of 2 surgical teams, 6 medical/dental teams, 1 dental team, 1 computer team, 1 logistical team and 1 administrative team in nearly a dozen locations. About half of the volunteers were working in remote villages in La Moskitia, one of the very poorest and hardest to reach area in eastern Honduras.

During ten days, the teams worked long days and saw more than 12,000 patients and performed over 50,000 patient contacts. This is the total of all surgeries, medical procedures, dental extractions, fillings, eyeglasses, vitamins, and prescriptions provided to the Honduran people. IHS provides services to the people of Honduras at no charge to them.

This letter serves as a heart-felt thank you from myself and from Karen. It also is a thanks from the Board of Directors, the many volunteers, but especially, from the needy Hondurans we serve.

Warmest regards,

John M. Kirckof

IHS Board Of Directors