



Contact: Emily Porter  
804-673-1411  
[eporter@accessamerica.com](mailto:eporter@accessamerica.com)

## **World Access Delivers Assistance to People, Businesses Affected by Tsunami**

*The Key Insurance & Assistance Provider for Blue Cross Blue Shield, Visa and AAA Sends Help with Medical, Communication and Transportation Resources*

RICHMOND, VA, January 5, 2004 – World Access, the foremost travel insurance and assistance provider in the United States, is delivering assistance to hundreds of customers affected by the tsunami and its aftermath through direct services and for client companies such as Blue Cross Blue Shield, Visa, as well as AAA and other major travel businesses that offer Access America travel insurance. The company's call center volume has increased about 30% due to tsunami-related calls. If you are a customer or business partner of World Access and need special assistance related to the tsunami, please call our emergency hotline at 800.284.8300.

World Access has been helping those in need in a number of ways, including:

- Mobilizing medical help to Thailand, Sri Lanka, Singapore and the Maldives, specifically flying in 13 doctors and nurses from our operations in Europe and the Asia Pacific.
- Providing 24-hour emergency communications assistance, including locating and identifying missing loved ones, as well as helping people in the area contact their friends and families back in North America.
- Finding and facilitating transportation to medical facilities.
- Arranging commercial flights and providing other evacuation resources, including flying many insureds to Singapore.
- Working with local governments to repatriate survivors and deceased insureds.

"Most people don't think about natural disasters when they are traveling but the tsunami reminds Americans to investigate their access to overseas medical care and evacuation capabilities," said Jon Ansell, President and CEO of World Access, noting that travel insurance and assistance is available through a variety of sources, including some health care plans, bankcards, travel agents and travel suppliers.

"When loved ones are in distress halfway around the world, your travel insurance provider can

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ease the stress by facilitating communications, making medical and transportation arrangements, and coordinating replacement of important documents such as passports and personal identification," Ansell said.

"It's important to know the type of travel insurance coverage you have and who is providing it. Major disasters like this could devastate inexperienced insurance providers and leave their clients financially and physically stranded. World Access has been in the business for more than 20 years, helping clients through good times and bad, including 9/11, various air, tour and cruise line bankruptcies, the 2004 hurricane season and now the tsunami," he said.

"World Access' vast global medical and assistance network allows us the unique ability to provide much needed aid to those affected by the tsunami. In addition to providing medical support, most of our tsunami-related cases now involve helping loved ones track down and communicate with each other, and transporting them to medical facilities and travel home," Ansell said. "In the months ahead, we expect to hear from more customers who will need assistance or have insurance claims."

Companies interested in doing business with World Access may contact the company at 800-628-4908.

A global leader in insurance and emergency assistance services, World Access provides travel insurance and assistance to millions of travelers each year, through customized solutions that increase revenue and enhance value for health care providers, travel agents and suppliers, credit card companies and more. World Access is also the issuer of Access America travel insurance products and a member of the Mondial Assistance Group, an international leader in travel insurance and assistance with 37 operations centers in 28 countries. Mondial is an affiliate of Allianz, which is donating \$1 million Euros (\$1.36 million USD) to the tsunami relief efforts. For more information, visit [www.worldaccess.com](http://www.worldaccess.com)

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Photo Available: Emergency helicopter service example (not actual shot from tsunami relief efforts).