

KENYON

EMERGENCY SERVICES

A WHEELS UP COMPANY

CASE STUDY

Mountainside search & recovery

BACKGROUND

In early 2008, a helicopter transporting workers from a copper mine in North Peru crashed in the Andes Mountains, killing all eight passengers, and the two crew members. The Peruvian authorities attended the incident site and also identified four of the crash victims, leaving four of the victims unidentified.

Kenyon was contracted by the mining company to conduct a further examination of the incident site to locate any additional evidence, which may assist the local authorities in their investigation, and also in the identification of the remaining four victims.

An initial Kenyon team was dispatched, comprised of forensic pathologists to assist the local coroner and a Crisis Communication specialist to assist the client company executives. A Kenyon operational team was then dispatched to conduct an examination of the crash site, which was located on the side of a cliff at an elevation of 2,000 meters, deep in the Amazon jungle.

CHALLENGES

The client / Kenyon team needed to conduct a secondary examination of the site due to the

presence of additional evidence. This 'double check' created potential sensitive situations with local authorities.

The crash site location on the side of a mountain required a specialist climbing team to assist the Kenyon operations team to gain access. The dense terrain of the Amazon jungle required a day and half trek on foot to reach the base camp, requiring high levels of fitness from the Kenyon team.

Logistics, food and supplies had to be either brought in by foot by the Kenyon team or flown into the site by helicopter.



SOLUTIONS

A team of forensic pathologists was deployed to assist the local coroner with the forensic examination of the deceased and the identification of the victims.

A Crisis Communications specialist was deployed to the client's headquarters to assist in responding to media inquiries and press releases.

A technical climbing team was deployed from the United States to assist the Kenyon scene specialists in gaining access to the incident site, which was on a cliff face at an elevation of 2,000 meters. A team of forensic specialists was deployed to evaluate, record and collect forensic evidence located at the incident site.

Air crash scene investigators were deployed to evaluate, record and collect evidence found at the scene to assist the local and aviation authorities in their investigations into the cause of the incident.

Kenyon managed the logistical aspects of the operation including site access, transport, supplies, and team equipment.

Kenyon also conducted search and recovery of the victims' personal effects, located both at the incident site and on the deceased. Kenyon managed the cleaning, recording, cataloging and return of many of the items to the victims' families.

RESULTS

The cockpit voice recorder was located. 60 fragments of human remains of the victims were recovered from the incident site by the Kenyon team.

Open communication and cooperation between Kenyon and local authorities eliminated any potential for jurisdictional issues regarding secondary scene examination and subsequent evidence collection.

The additional human remains recovered from the incident site were provided to the coroner, which assisted in the identification of the deceased.

Over 150 items of personal property belonging to the victims were recovered from the victims' remains and from the site. Many of the personal items were returned to the families, facilitating the grieving process.

The identity of the victims was confirmed with the collection of the additional evidence from the incident site. The actions of the client in initiating supplementary action into the identity of the victims of the crash was morally and ethically correct and also provided the families with valuable information, which assisted them in their grieving process.

Kenyon was able to provide the client with a specialist incident response team, not readily available from local authorities, which assisted in the location of new evidence and items in support of the incident investigation.

If you would like to know more about Kenyon Emergency Services, visit kenyoninternational.com or contact kenyon@kenyoninternational.com

