

Customer Care deploys security services for Australian nationals caught in civil unrest in Egypt

Sydney, 4th February 2011

Sydney– Customer Care Pty Ltd, the worldwide medical and travel assistance company, is providing emergency assistance to policyholders in Egypt. The team has been fielding calls from customers travelling or stationed in Egypt as well as those with upcoming trips from its 24 hour operations centre in Sydney. Over the past ten days of protest and civil unrest in Egypt, Customer Care has worked with its corporate customers to exercise their duty of care to their employees, providing security and safety information, and assistance with leaving the country where required. Our partners in Athens assisted in organizing a charter flight to evacuate a group of American travellers out of Egypt on 1st February and another 30 Students from NY University from Luxor. Both groups were taken to Athens, met by Athens Assistance staff who arranged local accommodation whilst arranging their onward flights.

Following days of anti-government protests the situation in Egypt remains extremely volatile and uncertain, with political tensions remaining elevated across the country. Protests continue in Cairo, Alexandria and Suez and Australians are advised to defer all non-essential travel to Cairo, Alexandria, Luxor, Suez and other major cities until the situation stabilises.

Any Australians currently in Cairo, Alexandria, Suez, Luxor and Ismailia are advised to depart as soon as practically possible. A country-wide curfew of 13:00 to 08:00 remains in effect in places, and travel during curfew hours is ill-advised. Cairo International Airport is operational, however roadblocks are creating major delays leading to and from the facility and there is major congestion at the airport due to large demand for flights. The Australian Government is currently flying Australians out of Cairo to Frankfurt and Customer Care is assisting many customers currently stranded in Germany with onward travel plans.

Customer Care's clients' policyholders in Egypt have been kept up to date with the situation and specific risks via regular updates and 24-hour access to Customer Care's contact centre with medical, security and case management experts who can assist with the most appropriate course of action to safeguard health, safety and wellbeing.

Customer Care security advisory and recommendations for Egypt

We currently advise against non-essential travel to Egypt. Furthermore, due to the potential for prolonged civil unrest and political instability and due to increased demand for air services out of Egypt, we now advise clients currently in Cairo, Alexandria, Suez, Luxor and Ismailia to depart as soon as practically possible, unless they have a pressing need to remain. Travel during the curfew hours is ill-advised. Please note that this position will be reassessed in response to developments in the country.

Personnel in Egypt should also adhere to the following:

- Travellers are advised to monitor political developments closely
- All large public gatherings, government buildings, security force facilities and political party offices should be avoided
- If travellers encounter demonstrations and/or violence, they are advised to return to secure accommodation immediately and to remain there until the situation stabilises
- Particular caution should be adopted near known protest hotspots, which include public squares, university campuses, government buildings, police/military facilities and low-income areas.
- Many demonstrations/protests begin in the afternoon, and extra caution is therefore advised at this time of day
- Stay informed of curfew hours; they are subject to change at little or no notice
- All persons planning to depart the country are advised to reconfirm the status of their flight(s) with their relevant travel provider, airline or tour operator
- Overland travel should be planned carefully; travellers are advised to ensure they have sufficient fuel supplies and breakdown support prior to departure.
- Be aware of, and plan for, potential media, power and telecommunication disruptions
- Travellers are advised to register with their embassy and check with their travel insurer for any cover for expenses incurred as a result of this event

Customer Care offers companies a corporate protection plan which looks after their employees around the world for events that may not be covered by insurance and includes regular updates in unfolding events effecting personal health and safety and telephone counselling. More information at www.customercare.com.au