

TE WAHA NUI

FREE

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'There was no hope at all of finding people alive'

Tragedy in Guatemala

by Britton Broun and Catherine Westwood

An Australian backpacker joined relief efforts in Guatemala after mudslides killed hundreds of people and left 5000 homeless.

Phil Eichinski, 26, spoke to *Te Waha Nui* after becoming trapped in the Santiago Atitlan district earlier this month.

He witnessed the extensive destruction and joined volunteers digging for corpses.

"We saw bodies pulled out from other dig sites. There was no hope at all of finding people alive," he says.

The mudslides followed torrential rain brought by Hurricane Stan two weeks ago.

Caretaker Aid Minister Marian Hobbs has pledged \$250,000 in aid to the affected Central American areas.

Unicef, Oxfam and the Red Cross have not launched appeals in New Zealand.

They say relief work in earthquake-struck Pakistan has been their main focus.

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FATAL MUDSLIDES: Rescue workers pull the body of a child from a buried village in the Santiago Atitlan district.

PHOTO: PHIL EICHINSKI

Sacked presenter returns to Maori TV

by Kirsty Charles

Sacked Maori Television Service presenter Julian Wilcox will return to his role in January after conciliatory talks cleared the air between staff and management.

"I'm happy that I have my job back and I'm looking forward to getting back into work," Wilcox told *Te Waha Nui*.

Wilcox was fired for alleged disloyalty last month after he was shown to have confirmed to the media that emails had been circulated at MTS asking staff about their political affiliations.

He was not responsible for leaking the emails, but had been involved in providing information regarding them.

The leaked emails led to negative publicity for the station. They came after then Labour candidate Dover Samuels accused MTS of political bias

towards the Maori Party during the election campaign.

Wilcox is also a lecturer in the Faculty of Maori Development at AUT.

He has issued a public apology expressing regret over his actions and affirming his commitment to te reo Maori and the kaupapa of MTS.

As part of the apology Wilcox said working at Maori Television was a privilege. "I have been given another opportunity to work at this station. Maori Television is a taonga and I acknowledge the kaumatua who fought for 30 years for its development."

MTS chief executive Jim Mather said in a statement that the issue had been a sad one for everyone involved.

He said he respected the maturity that Wilcox had displayed in accepting responsibility for his actions.

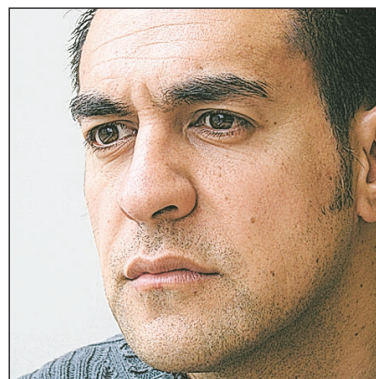
Unite union leader Matt McCarten has been to MTS over the last three weeks to help with negotiations and to establish a set of guidelines for staff and management to avoid disputes in the future.

"We want Maori Television to work," he says.

"We want everyone to feel good but also you have to have the integrity of the two-way loyalty and a structure of certain obligations from management and certain obligations from workers. Otherwise it would just fall apart."

McCarten says the experience has been a learning curve for all involved. For Maori Television having a collective arrangement that everyone understands makes the station more robust for future dealings with politicians.

McCarten says that by having MTS workers organised



Julian Wilcox

PHOTO: SARAH KACI

and accountable to their viewership.

"They still are Maori and they still are Maori Party supporters, there's no question. But they also are there to do a job for Maori in the wider vision and it can't be captured by any [party], whether it's Labour or the Maori Party."

McCarten says there is inevitably some sensitivity around reporting on a topic and taking part in it.

"If everyone's committed to the same kaupapa and they fall out, it's not because the kaupapa is wrong, it's because their relationships have gone wrong," McCarten says.

People working at MTS "want to be a vanguard for Maori in our society. They want to play that role and that's their vision."

Additional reporting by Sarah Kaci.

there would be an understanding about the employment relationship.

The union would then be able to help when political pressure went on.

He believes that public funded broadcasters should not have a relationship with any political party because politics is a topic television stations report on. They should be concentrating on

