A MESSAGE FROM RICHARD R. KELLEY TO OUR OUTRIGGER ‘OHANA

Castaway Island, Fiji Resort reopened

By Dr. Richard Kelley

As promised, our Castaway Island, Fiji Resort reopened on Wednesday, June 1!

The resort, located on a small island a few miles from Nadi International Airport (NAN), Fiji’s main link to the rest of the world, had been severely damaged by Tropical Cyclone Winston in February. (See http://goo.gl/AwVy2M and http://goo.gl/5ePFvM for our coverage at the time.) Fortunately, no deaths or serious injuries occurred at the resort, but that was regrettably not the case on Fiji’s other islands. The cyclone, one of the strongest in memory to make landfall in Fiji, caused extensive damage, injuries and loss of life elsewhere in the country.

Not long after the damage was assessed, General Manager Steven Andrews, in consultation with Darren Edmonstone and the APAC team, predicted that the resort could be back in service in just three short months and set June 1 as the reopening target date. It seemed very ambitious at the time, but the goal has been achieved. “It is proof that our Castaway Island vuvale, our family, is so much stronger and more resilient than any storm,” said Steven.

Steven reported that our hosts, some of whom remained on the island during the cyclone, worked tirelessly, putting in back-breaking days clearing debris, cleaning swimming pools, restoring gardens and providing support to the TA Construction team in making repairs to bures (the resort’s guest accommodations, luxuriously upgraded versions of traditional Fijian huts) and thatched roofing.

Locating and shipping construction materials was a major hurdle. All sorts of other obstacles had to be overcome as well.
Castaway Island, Fiji Resort ... << From 1

Fourteen of the resort's 65 bures were either rebuilt or upgraded in the process. Improvements were also made to the fabulous outdoor kitchen and beachfront restaurants. To celebrate the reopening, Chef Markus Nufer has created new menus for all of the resort’s four restaurants.

Many other members of Outrigger’s Asia-Pacific group worked hard to bring this dream to life.

Congratulations to everyone who took part in the effort that not only restored the severely damaged Castaway Island, Fiji Resort, but improved it as well and brought it back on line in an impressively short time!

Vinaka vaka levu! Thank you very much!

Daniel Roy (resort manager); Steven Andrews (general manager); Ben Johnson (director of sales and marketing); Elizabeth Mugambi, baby Theodore and Evangelos Zahos; Lingo Reece (duty manager); Hiram Whippy (front office manager); and Monica Koroivelbau (food and beverage manager)

Photos bottom right:
There is much to celebrate
A song of welcome to Castaway’s first guests