

Important Information Regarding: Flight Cancellations Due to Volcanic Ash from Chilean Eruption

13 June 2011

Present Situation

New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs advises (10 June 2011):

“On 5 June 2011 the Puyehue-Cordon-Caulle volcano range near Osorno in Chile erupted. Authorities in Chile and Argentina are continuing to monitor the direction of the ash clouds.

New Zealanders in any areas designated by the authorities for evacuation are advised to leave immediately. Those in other surrounding areas should monitor local media and follow the advice of the local authorities. New Zealanders travelling to the Lakes District are advised to monitor the local media for updates.

There has been some disruption to flights and anyone travelling to/from and within Chile, Argentina and Uruguay is advised to check with the relevant airline whether flights are operating prior to going to the airport.

New Zealanders with potentially affected travel plans are advised to contact their airline or travel agent to check whether their particular flights have been affected. If your travel plans have been disrupted you should contact your travel insurer to check what policy provisions apply.”

Additional Information as at 13 June 2011

- Ash from Chile's Puyehue-Cordon Caulle volcano eruption reached an altitude of up to 50,000 feet (15,240 metres) where high atmosphere trade winds have carried ash particles east over considerable distance.
- The ash cloud reached the western tip of New Zealand's South Island on the evening of Saturday 11 June at altitude between 20,000ft (6096m) and 35,000ft (10,668m).
- The altitude of the ash cloud is within the range of cruising altitudes for both commercial jets and turboprops operating within New Zealand airspace.
- As result more than 60 flights were cancelled over the weekend with current media reports suggesting that “flights over New Zealand could be disrupted for days”.¹
- The MetService's Volcanic Ash Advisory Centre (VAAC) will be updating its warnings shortly.

¹ Per NZ Herald at 13 June 2011,
source http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10731938

Chartis New Zealand's Position

The following advice applies to policies issued or travel arrangements made before midnight on the 12th June 2011. Travelers who purchased or arranged cover after this date and time would not have cover available because the situation had occurred and has been widely reported in the media.

In general, under our Policies cover is provided for trip cancellation and additional expenses incurred including reasonable trip amendment costs arising from this event.

Before we can consider a claim or provide advice on a claim travelers should:

1. Confirm with their airline that their flight has been cancelled.
2. Contact their airline to confirm flight cancellations and alternative arrangements.
3. Contact their travel agent or their airline and/or accommodation providers to see what costs they will meet or amendment concessions or refunds they are prepared to provide.

As always, each claim will be considered on its merits taking into account the individual circumstances of the claim and the terms and conditions of the policy.

Policy holders are advised to check their particular policy wording for eligibility, limit of coverage and the type of expenses that can be claimed.

1. Trip cancellation

Trip cancellation claims arising from the present situation will be considered in accordance with the terms and conditions of your Policy.

All reasonable steps must be taken to minimize your claim.

In some situations we may agree to cover trip amendment costs where these are less than the trip cancellation costs.

Please check with airline and accommodation providers first to see what amendment concessions or refunds they are prepared to provide.

2. Additional expenses

In respect of travellers presently overseas, additional expense claims including but not limited to additional accommodation and scheduled transportation costs arising from the present situation, will be considered subject to the applicable policy terms, conditions and exclusions. Insureds will need to check the applicable section of the Policy wording to see what cover is available.

All reasonable steps must be taken to minimize your claim.

Please check with airline and accommodation providers first to see what amendment concessions or refunds they are prepared to provide.

No cover is available for used portions of prepaid travel arrangements. Where cover is available under both Cancellation and Additional Expense Sections Insureds can claim under either the Cancellation or Additional Expense Section for the same period, not both.

Please note:

1. We are monitoring the present the situation and will advise further update(s) should our position change.
2. This position statement only remains applicable as long as the present circumstances prevail.

Date of Issue: 13 June 2011