

SPACKOGRAM

Number 2

Greetings from Zambia from Team Sampson Phase 1.

Well Robert Spackman, Michael and Aaron Sampson have all arrived safely in Zambia. We are all tired little Vegemites and the power has gone out so I thought I would throw a little document whilst the laptop battery still had charge in it.



We are currently guests of Flying Mission Zambia (FMZ) in their very hospitable Guest House. Above is the runway and the new hanger which we are helping put up some walls and workshops to help progress the development of facilities for FMZ. In the midground you can see one of the FMZ Cessna aircraft and the interim hanger. To the left of the new large hanger you can see shiny new concrete poured on the last day of our first working week. We broke the record for the base and had 5 large concrete trucks deliveries in one day. We finished this day with Michael power planning with the "helicopter" to the illumination of a couple of LED headlamps and the headlights of a borrowed Land Cruiser.

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Before concrete and setting up the form work.

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Concrete trying to dry before the sun goes down...The sun beat us.

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We had tried in vain to get the aging Land Rover to start so it could light up Michaels tireless efforts on the helicopter so it was the reliable Toyota to the rescue. The Land Rover FMZ has loaned to us has character. You cannot start it with the clutch depressed. Finding first gear is almost a black art. Thankfully it almost gets off to a start in 3rd gear at the lights in Lusaka. Once you know you are in 3rd then 1st is easier to find. It has not let us down yet on the dirt road to Lusaka and it is much nicer over the bumpy road than some other 4WD around the base. We have now worked out how to lock it up properly, which took us a few days of fiddling. As Michael says "You really have to love a Land Rover to buy a Land Rover!"



The Guest House is great except no Screens on the doors or windows. This is Malaria country but no one seems to build houses with screens to keep out insects, but have mosquito nets over the beds??? When the sun goes down you start seeing, hearing and "feeling" the mosquitoes in the Guest House. We are well feed by our local cook

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Esther who is spoiling with great food. For lunch we had Roast Beef and vegetables and it was delicious. Deserts have often been partially nice fresh local fruit and ice cream.



I am finding it hard to stay awake in the afternoon after the big meals, but the Saeco coffee machine here is an excellent help. On the hospitality side things are great. We even get our clothes washed and brought back pressed. A man could get used to this.

Today's highlight was going up in a test flight for one of the Cessna aircraft. It was a real buzz and Aaron seemed to enjoy being in the co-pilot seat up front. I was happy in the back taking in the scenery.

Not sure if Kieran will have a younger brother follow in his footsteps to be a pilot but I think only his girlfriend Laura can put a bigger smile on his face. Be interesting to compare his face on the video of bungee jumping at Victoria Falls after next weekend.

The shot was taken whilst on "test flight". Does that make Aaron a test co-pilot??? Many thanks go to the Chief Engineer Joel Bolthouse who took us up whilst he was conducting a routine test flight. We both loved it.

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We returned to ground to find a weary Michael working hard. Michael has been over doing it and been in the wars. He cut his finger during the first week whilst unrolling plastic which had jagged edges which peeled his finger like an apple. He then being the only experienced and qualified concreter had to do all the "helicoptering" on a machine set up for a 5'6" Zambian, not for a 6' 5" inch Australian.

He then helped out the Director of FMZ Brian Wilson on Sunday who had inadvertently earlier had chain-sawed a tree directly onto power lines his rental property share with the Zambian Defense National Service Base the day before. Brian has "some fence mending" with his neighbors' to do and they have lots of guns!

Love thy neighbour took on a whole new meaning when they menacingly turned up at the wire fence and started arguing with Brian whilst there was potentially live wires lying on the ground on there side of the flimsy wire fence. It was very evident that they had consumed more than one alcoholic beverage that day which did not help the situation. What also did not help the incident was that it had occurred on Saturday afternoon before dinner was cooked.

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Our American guests that we are sharing the Guest House with just got in. They relayed to me the whole of Lusaka is experiencing a black out. Not sure if Brian is too blame but we shall see what is reported in the papers tomorrow.

Brian's big old Stihl chain saw is a heavy old steel thing and was not light to carry let alone operate. Michael said his back was a bit sore but I think he was in worse shape than he was letting on. He was definitely not fighting fit first thing Monday morning. Not surprisingly he went to bed early tonight to have a well deserved rest. I just hope he is not woken up by Aaron talking in his sleep again at some ungodly hour of the morning. If he does wake him up we have a perfect spot to put him. The boys have dug a nice little hole for the fuel tanks near the hangar.

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Well tomorrow we hope to wake up refreshed and read a longer Psalm and meditate upon what God has in store for us as we work amongst unsaved Zambian workers as we try to complete the many tasks that FMZ would like us to do for them. There is a good 6 months work to do in current building projects just for a concreter/builder and a team of tradesmen and workers.

Pray that we get opportunities to share the Good News of Jesus our Lord and Saviour to the unsaved here in Zambia. The work is progressing well and we are all in good spirits, just need to take care of ourselves. Our aim is to assist FMZ improve their facilities so they can better maintain their fleet of aircraft and keep them in the air.

