

27/2/2010
3.34 am:
Lampa/Chile

An earthquake measuring 8.8 on the Richter scale wakes Chile from its sleep. Lasting three minutes, the earthquake exposes houses, buildings and bridges to the unleashed forces of nature – the fifth-largest earthquake in recorded history. Roads are torn up, paths sink into the ground, power supplies, telecommunications and electronic data services all collapse. The catastrophe also affects the “document mountain”, which the international data backup company Iron Mountain has gathered over many years and stood some 10 metres high.



Fighting the forces of nature with combined strengths

BELFOR saves vast amounts of vital data from an earthquake

When document mountains collapse ...

The company Iron Mountain in Lampa, a suburb of Santiago de Chile, manages one of South America's largest databases, which holds countless millions of documents and data media that are of vital importance to their owners. On 27th February, the supporting sections of the warehouse collapsed, bringing down with them around a million document boxes. The sprinkler systems came on, soaking the boxes through.

And if that wasn't bad enough, many of the customers now decided they wanted their documents back from storage.

...BELFOR rushes to the rescue

This is just what BELFOR is here for! The ambitious pledge to complete the restoration project proposed by Iron Mountain in just three months opened up the path to a collaboration that scored maximum points on the “international restoration scale”. Supporting

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“We anticipated a recovery time of 10 to 12 months. When BELFOR presented its extremely ambitious 3-month plan, it was the best news since that early morning on February 27th”.

Ary Acuña Montt, Director of Operations and Technology, Iron Mountain Chile

sections of the building needed to be stabilised, all of the folders removed one by one, restored and then put back in their rightful place.

Combining strengths

BELFOR faced a complex challenge: over 50 people from America and Canada travelled to Chile, including scaffolders, joiners, roofers, document recovery experts, mechanical engineers, logistics specialists and administration professionals. BELFOR colleagues from Spain, who were working on another recovery job in Chile, also lent a hand. European and American restoration expertise was combined with the motivation of over 200 local workers 12 hours a day, six days a week. Many of the stages of the project had to be co-ordinated in two languages. They progressed so quickly, however, that Iron Mountain actually asked if the pace could be slowed down a little in order to be able to keep up with the recovery.

“Thanks to BELFOR’s response speed, excellent leadership, safety focus and solid advice, our business will be re-built better than ever.”

Ary Acuña Montt

Supporting safety

No matter how quick the work, safety must never be compromised and this is where Childress Engineering LLC from Dallas, Texas, which already operates in Chile, was instrumental. It took care of the stabilisation of supporting sections of the building, in order

to allow BELFOR crews safe access to the endangered areas – and we’d like to say a huge thank you right now for their efforts!

“I told them: “Your disaster is BELFOR’s disaster!”

Hensel Morris Jr., National Project Manager, BELFOR USA

Fighting the rain

One further important task was the protection of the soaked documents against further water damage. After all, many of the roof structures had been destroyed, and it was almost the rainy season. BELFOR stretched over 70,000 m² of protective sheeting over the tattered roof, so that when the rains came, the valuable contents of the boxes were completely safe.

Overcoming the earthquake

Before the earthquake, BELFOR was virtually unknown in Chile. That situation has now changed. There is now a permanent BELFOR office in Chile, which allows the long-term consequences of the earthquake to be handled much more quickly and more effectively. The earthquake therefore left behind not just destruction, but also brought about huge rebuilding and restoration projects.

“Muchas gracias to the BELFOR power team!”

Ary Acuña Montt



Top: After the earthquake
Centre: During the restoration work
Bottom: After the restoration



IRON MOUNTAIN®

A monument to documents: Iron Mountain

Iron Mountain offers information management services involving the storage, backup and administration of corporate documents (records management) and digital data media (data protection). Founded in 1951, the company currently serves more than 140,000 corporate clients worldwide. In order to offer its customers a uniformly high standard of security, Iron Mountain collaborates worldwide with BELFOR, using our RED ALERT® emergency priority service. This means that we're on site even more quickly in the event of an emergency and we can instigate coordinated measures immediately. This makes the "iron mountain" even safer should a disaster of any kind strike!

BELFOR's strengths:

TEAM SPIRIT

“Even though we do not always speak the same language, our ability to rally global partners around a significant challenge and work together towards a common goal is a unique characteristic of the BELFOR family.”

Marshall Oliver CR, Director Technical Services, BELFOR Canada