Crisis Care Commitment
relief in times of crisis

care when it’s needed most

commitment when others turn away
Vision:

to improve the lives of vulnerable people in Australia and internationally by mobilising the power of humanity.

Mission:

to be a leading humanitarian organisation in Australia, improving the lives of vulnerable people through services delivered and promotion of humanitarian laws and values.
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Kids from remote Western Australia enjoy a healthy start to the day at the Good Start Breakfast Club. Photo: Rodney Dekker
strategic goals

1 champion humanitarian values for the protection of life, health and human dignity through promotion, education and advocacy

2 forge a unified, inclusive and sustainable movement, soundly managed and financially secure, which reflects our country’s diversity

3 assist and empower vulnerable people, especially those most in need in Australia and in the Asia-Pacific region, in their everyday lives and in times of crisis

In Roma, a remote Queensland community, a group of older men are helping each other with support from Red Cross. Photo: Hamish Cairns
Time for renewal

In July 2007 a team of Red Cross people from across our organisation embarked on a comprehensive review of our activities to achieve a more strategic and focused approach, and to leverage our unique network. In short, we wanted to make sure we are on target to achieve our vision and mission.

As a first step we reviewed all the services we offer and also our operating areas such as IT, finance, HR and marketing, fundraising and communications. What emerged from the review is a clear direction that will ensure we are better placed to help the most vulnerable.

What has been endorsed soundly by our Board is a blueprint for an outwardly looking, entrepreneurial organisation committed to:

- making a substantial investment in the renewal of Red Cross services to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged
- building on the rich history and expertise of Red Cross in Australia and internationally
- using our unparalleled network and the presence of our volunteers, members and staff in metropolitan, regional and remote areas to reach the most disadvantaged people, no matter who they are, no matter where they live.

We will consolidate our activities to build on our strengths in the following areas:

- Disaster and Emergency services
- Overcoming social exclusion by providing bridges back into the community
- Addressing the impact of migration
- Addressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage
- Tackling entrenched locational disadvantage
- Championing International Humanitarian Law

This is an exciting time of growth for Red Cross and we look forward to working closely with Red Cross people to turn our vision to reality.

And more than ever we will use the strength of our global organisation – with a presence in 186 countries and 100 million volunteers strong – to make an immediate impact and lasting impression on our Asia Pacific region.

MORE ABOUT THE SERVICES RENEWAL
The strength of our global network

The strength of this network has never been more evident than in May this year when the Ayeyawady Delta of Myanmar (Burma) was decimated by Cyclone Nargis and aid efforts were challenged by the difficulties of accessing this remote region. We joined our Red Cross Red Crescent partners, including some 10,000 local volunteers, to provide shelter, clean water and food to some 430,000 of the 2.4 million people affected. Australian Red Cross aid workers skilled in logistics, disaster management and tracing were there, helping secure lives and re-unite families torn apart by the disaster.

And just ten days later the strength of our network again proved a lifeline for many of the 15 million people displaced by an earthquake that affected eight provinces in southern China. Within three months more than half a million temporary homes were in place and Red Cross’s long term effort continues with the reconstruction of entire villages.

With the continued support of AusAID we have increased our long-term commitment to vulnerable communities in the Asia Pacific Region. We are supporting landmine survivors in Cambodia, providing clean water for families in Timor Leste and Laos among others, and working with isolated villagers in China to prepare for disaster. In Mongolia we’re finding ways to prevent HIV, while health and sanitation workshops are helping families to stay healthy in remote Solomon Islands.

Closer to home, in January 2008 we responded to floods affecting 65 per cent of Queensland by helping to establish and run evacuation centres for people escaping the rising waters. We supported emergency workers around the clock and visited people still in their homes to make sure they had all they needed to survive the worst flooding in recent history.

And we would like to again place on record our appreciation to the former Prime Minister the Hon John Howard, former Minister the Hon Tony Abbott and the Department of Health and Ageing for the $5 million Annual General Purpose Grant which has been such a welcome contribution to our work. We are delighted to report that the incoming Prime Minister Mr Rudd and the Minister for Health Nicola Roxon have confirmed this level of grant for the coming year.

This year our save-a-mate program received international recognition for ‘Innovative Drug Policy’ at the United Nation’s 51st session of the Commission of Narcotic Drugs in Vienna in March. The award presented by the Board of the Senlis Council was for contributing to Global Drug Policy by promoting and implementing effective health based solutions to the drug problem. The program was particularly commended as ‘an important initiative in drug policy and a powerful illustration of how a health-based approach to drug policy effectively and poignantly relieves suffering and reduces drug-related damage to individuals, families and society’.

Commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

Our commitment to the most vulnerable people in the most vulnerable communities has also been illustrated in real terms this year with a considerable investment in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We have expanded our Good Start Breakfast Clubs in those communities from 20 to 76 around the country, meaning that thousands of Aboriginal children have a better start to their school day, a better chance at doing well at school and a brighter future.

A new generation of Red Cross people

It is our heartfelt hope that these children will one day help forge the future of an increasingly diverse and effective Red Cross. In fact, the past three years we have welcomed some 15,000 new regular supporters aged under 35 who share our commitment to better the lives of the most vulnerable people in Australia and Asia Pacific.

And this year we are undertaking an organisation-wide exercise to ensure that the hard-won place we hold in the hearts and minds of Australians is built on by the next generation of dedicated members and volunteers. We are open and committed to understanding how young people want to help and to providing them with clear ways to connect with their communities. We look forward to the future together with confidence and a shared understanding of humanity – our first and foremost Fundamental Principle.

Greg Vickery AM, Chairman

Robert Tickner, CEO
strengthening disaster and emergency services
‘I am still worried about many of my friends living in the area – I am eager to work here and want to contribute to help our people.’

Myanmar Red Cross volunteer Thein Tun Aung – Cyclone Nargis devastated the Ayeyarwady delta and parts of the country’s largest city, Yangon. More than 84,000 people were killed, more than 53,000 are still missing and 115 townships were ravaged.
Clean water in Myanmar

More than half a million survivors of Myanmar’s devastating Cyclone Nargis have received food, water and emergency supplies, and 500 households in the remote Ayeyarwady Delta received clean water every day.

Light enough to be transported to the delta on a small boat soon after the cyclone struck, our new disaster response water treatment system filtered up to 5,000 litres of water per hour and was quickly mastered by local Red Cross staff.

The water treatment system was the first of four new ‘modules’ designed by our disaster response team to be easily and quickly transported to disaster zones, providing families with water, sanitation, shelter and protection from mosquito-borne diseases.

Late last year, the water module was flown by helicopter to remote Popondetta in Papua New Guinea’s Northern Province to provide safe water during the severe floods caused by Cyclone Guba.

MORE ABOUT THE RESPONSE TO CYCLONE NARGIS

5,000

litres of clean water for cyclone-struck families each hour

More than 2.4 million people are beginning to piece their lives back together, after Cyclone Nargis tore through the Ayeyarwady Delta.

People in Myanmar were affected by Cyclone Nargis.
Photo: Reuters/Stan Honda courtesy www.alertnet.org
Building back safer in China

We contributed to a global call for more than 100,000 tents needed in the areas of southwest China hit hardest by the May earthquake, which killed 69,000 people and left 15 million people displaced – five million of them homeless.

Whole villages must be reconstructed, including homes, health stations, hospitals, schools and community facilities, and soon after the earthquake mass sanitation and water systems were set up.

In a time of high emotional stress, children gradually started finding some level of normality when the first of 1,000 transitional schools were constructed in Sichuan province.

Reconstruction and recovery is expected to take up to three years, and we are working with local partners and other agencies to help rebuild the lives, livelihoods and economies of earthquake affected communities.

With detailed planning, families received quilts, food parcels and kitchen sets, medical supplies and hygiene kits as well as clean water and clothing.

› MORE ABOUT THE RESPONSE TO THE CHINA EARTHQUAKE

Housing in Aceh, Indonesia

‘When I get to the new house, my friends and I want to play with our skipping ropes and play tag,’ says Ocha, who was six when the 2004 tsunami separated her from her father at the food market in Banda Aceh. She was lifted on to the roof of a house and waited there until rescued by another survivor.

Now nine, she is looking forward to moving out of the Cot Cut transitional shelter camp and into a permanent home with her extended family at the Ladong housing site.

‘I don’t know which one is mine but I think it will be brown and white,’ says Ocha, who wants to become a teacher. For now, her focus remains firmly on fun.

› MORE ABOUT THE 2004 TSUNAMI RESPONSE

More than 100,000 survivors of China’s devastating Sichuan earthquake will be supported over the next 12 months through shelter, water and sanitation, health and reconstruction programs.
Peace of mind in remote reaches of Northern Territory

‘I’d be dead without Red Cross,’ says Colin, 70, who lives in the tiny town of Batchelor in the Northern Territory. ‘I’ve been through two cyclones before, but Cyclone Helen was the most frightening experience of my life.’

Colin signed up to receive a daily call from Red Cross after suffering a stroke seven years ago. When the volunteers couldn’t reach Colin because the power had gone down, they alerted the police who in turn made sure Colin was okay.

Red Cross is working with the other agencies to ensure that during emergencies like Cyclone Helen, frail, aged and vulnerable people in communities in the disparate Northern Territory are cared for and feel safe in their homes.

Queensland floods dampen the bush, but not its spirit

‘Everything was there that we needed and the kids were entertained. We can’t complain, there are a lot of people worse off than us from the flood water.’

Belinda Otto and her family were among more than 2,600 Emerald residents who stayed at a Red Cross evacuation centre when severe floods hit central Queensland in early January 2008.

‘The worst affected townships in regional Queensland were Charleville, Emerald and Mackay. In Charleville, around 100 residents were evacuated, although the temporary levee established in the town protected it from the worst of the floodwaters. Within a few days, over 3,000 people were registered and supported at three evacuation centres in Emerald. Shortly after, emergency teams were again activated to Mackay and about 7,000 people were assisted at evacuation centres and over 8,800 outreach visits were made.’
Children like Bincheng, seven, no longer risk crossing dangerous flood waters to get to school, thanks to the paved pathway and two bridges that were built as part of a disaster preparedness project.

Prepared for disaster

Getting to school used to be frightening and dangerous during the rainy season for the children of Shangmingtai in Guangxi province, south-west China. Every rainy season, the village faces floods which threaten houses and fields, and make paths impassable and getting to school dangerous.

But a new path and bridge mean children can now safely get to school all year round.

'You could get swept away when the water was strong,' says 11-year-old Wei Wenxiu. 'With the new path and bridge I don’t need to be afraid anymore – even cars can drive on this road.'

We are working with locals in 12 villages to better prepare for natural disasters through training and building or repairing infrastructure such as water supplies, canals, bridges, flood gates, roads, water pipes and levee banks. On average, it costs about $12,000 to help one village in China where the average household income is less than $1 a day.

'Red Cross helped us to make a plan and budget for the bridge to the school, as well as make a disaster plan for the village,' says Village Disaster Committee member Wei Guangning. 'Now people know how to evacuate their homes when there is a flood or fire.'
overcoming social exclusion by providing bridges back into the community
'I love living on my own. It's a relief to know that people are checking on me every day.'

When Dorothy Feltham of Western Australia, 81, fell in her home, she got in contact with Red Cross because she wanted to keep her independence. Every day more than 5,000 elderly, frail and socially isolated Australians living alone receive a phone call to make sure they are alright. It provides peace of mind for them and their families, and gives them the confidence to live independently in their own home, knowing help is not far away. ‘It is good because my family doesn’t have to worry quite so much,’ says Dorothy. ‘I enjoy it too; the caller talks to me about her family. I love it.’
‘It took me two months to learn how to walk, and it was difficult to do basic things like go to the bathroom.’

Cambodian landmine survivor Souen Rem now runs a grocery shop in Pailin province. Photo: Australian Red Cross/Somira Sao

Working towards self-sufficiency

Soeun Rem is rebuilding her life after losing both legs to a landmine while planting soybeans in her family’s field.

She now runs a grocery shop in Pailin, Cambodia (one of the most heavily mined areas in the world) thanks to a micro-loan from the Landmine Survivor Assistance Program, funded by AusAID.

Rem, who earns $15 a day, is among around 2,000 landmine survivors and their families receiving economic, social and physical support from the program.

‘It took me two months to learn how to walk, and it was difficult to do basic things like go to the bathroom,’ says Rem.

Around six million landmines were laid in Cambodia between 1978 and 1989. Thankfully, the number of people being injured is falling each year (there have been 312 incidents this year) but landmine survivors require ongoing care and support for the rest of their lives.

MORE ABOUT THE LANDMINE SURVIVOR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IN CAMBODIA

408 microloans to help landmine survivors rebuild their lives
‘It was my first time in prison and I was really scared for my safety, I couldn’t contact my family and let them know that I was OK. The Peer Supporter helped me by letting me know how to access a phone account and organise what I needed to do. He also talked about what it was going to be like and reassured me it wasn’t like TV.’

Prison inmate supported by Prisoner Support Program in Tasmania

Supporting prisoners and their families in Tasmania

A select group of inmates have been trained with the skills required to act as a peer mentor to fellow inmates as part of a program developed in consultation with Correctional Services staff in Tasmania. This enables them to address and support others with the on-going issues and anxiety often faced by inmates. Peer mentors also work with custodial staff to build trust, with the aim of reducing the number of serious incidents, including self harm. They also help prepare inmates who are due to be released by familiarising them with links into the community.

Night Café helps homeless in Queensland

‘They really believed in me and gave me love that I hadn’t experienced anywhere else. They gave me so much support for everything I needed.’

Brisbane Night Café has continued to grow as a ‘safe space’ for people under 26 who are homeless or marginalised. It provides a hot meal, showers, toilets and access to legal assistance and health clinics.

Melanie Baker and her twins in their kite surfing shop in Western Australia. Photo: Tim Lofthouse

Twin peaks and troughs

‘When our twins were born at 29 weeks we had no [family] support here,’ says Melanie Baker. ‘The challenge of looking after two babies who required extra special attention was almost unmanageable. They were weak and underweight.’

Melanie signed up for the Family Support Program where she met Lesley, a volunteer who visited once a week. ‘Lesley was a huge help to us. It was like having an onsite adopted “grandma”. We learned so much from her.’

The Family Support program, established 15 years ago, has guided and supported almost 3,000 families, helping them develop practical skills and domestic and childcare routines.

Now, mental health volunteers are going into the homes of mothers with mental health issues to help them develop important skills such as problem-solving, to enhance social networks and to improve time management.

› MORE ABOUT OUR SERVICES IN AUSTRALIA
Over the past decade, many forest villages, such as Khantheung, have grown as communities are relocated to lower areas. Khantheung village is only ten years old and villagers struggle with access to water, staying well and making ends meet. As well as using local materials where possible and setting up committees to ensure sustainability, we are investing in the human skills and knowledge that are crucial to the future of the water systems.

Sex workers share health messages

Mongolian sex workers are joining forces with their peers in Australia to share information about health and HIV, communication and negotiation skills and the rights of sex workers.

‘We hope that sex workers in Mongolia progress to have strong advocacy and their voices heard, not only by Mongolian Red Cross but also by the Mongolian Government,’ says Elena Jeffreys, from Scarlet Alliance, Australia’s sex worker organisation. This year with our support, she met sex workers in the northernmost province of Mongolia, Khövsgöl.

The first reported HIV case in Mongolia was in 1992. The rate of infection has remained low compared with surrounding countries like China and Russia, but is now on the rise. There are 36 reported cases of HIV in Mongolia and 60 per cent of the female cases are sex workers, although it is estimated that there are around another 475 unreported cases.

‘Sexual health is an entire social responsibility – sex workers aren’t the only community affected, and everybody has the right to access HIV information and protection,’ says Elena.

Talking out loud in Victoria

When you’re young, few things are worse than being teased, as year nine student Jack has experienced. Despite becoming upset when his schoolmates pronounced his surname in a derogatory way, Jack would keep quiet. However, after participating in a Talk Out Loud session with Red Cross at his school, where students discussed problems that bothered them, he felt able to voice his concern. ‘Once I brought this up, my mates said they would back me up and make sure no one called me that name anymore,’ the Bendigo South West Secondary College student says.

Peer support trainer Kylie Miller says the Talk Out Loud program encourages young people to speak freely about anything that might be bothering them. ‘Bullying and name calling can lead to further problems, so it’s really important to take a preventative approach to raise awareness about mental health issues.’

Talk Out Loud is a Red Cross initiative especially for young people. Its aims are to increase knowledge and understanding of mental health, decrease stigma and increase the confidence of young people to talk about and seek assistance for mental health issues.

A Talk Out Loud session at Jack’s school helped him ask his friends to stop teasing.
The gift of life

‘If it wasn’t for blood donors, I wouldn’t be here today. It’s as simple as that,’ says John Heffernan.

John is just one of many Australians whose lives have been saved in the past year, thanks to 1.2 million volunteer blood donations.

A New South Wales farmer and volunteer fire fighter, John was hospitalised for five months after being engulfed in flames and receiving burns to 85 per cent of his body.

‘I’ve helped to fight bush fires before but this time, whilst I was on the back of the trailer, the wind changed,’ he says. ‘My clothes were literally incinerated.’

John was put into an induced coma so his body could begin the long healing process. He received 54 litres of red cells, plasma, platelets and many precious plasma products – all from volunteer blood donors.

Even more people will benefit from our Blood Service in the future with improved distribution procedures, a new National Call Centre and a new national blood bag strategy that will reduce the cost of blood bags.

The introduction of bacterial contamination screening for all platelet donations means blood components are now safer.

Australians continue to support patient needs for plasma products, donating 352 tonnes of plasma to CSL last year, the highest level ever supplied.

We have also expanded our policy and humanitarian work, with blood projects in Banda Aceh.

John Heffernan, 24, from Junee, in New South Wales is thankful to blood donors for helping to save his life.

MORE ABOUT THE BLOOD SERVICE
World first in CPR from Tasmania

At the touch of a button first aid CPR instructions are now downloadable to a mobile phone. This groundbreaking technology is a world first, and has been developed in conjunction with Multi-Ed Medical, a Tasmanian medical education company.

Launched in June 2008, the downloadable instructions have the potential to save lives at the touch of a few buttons. Australians can now download the CPR animation to their mobile phone by dialing 19 951 515.

MORE ABOUT THE CPR DOWNLOAD

92,000 First Aid certificates issued

Encouraging more Australians to learn first aid

While 80–90% of people in Germany and Norway are trained in first aid, only 11% in Australia are first aid trained. This year we produced a series of video clips to promote the importance of first aid training amongst groups such as new drivers and new parents.

Our aim is to see one person in every household trained in first aid and a compulsory requirement for new drivers to train in first aid. Targeting L-platers through new media such as YouTube is particularly important, as it is little known that many young lives are lost because an unconscious driver or passenger slumps forward blocking their airway - young lives that could be easily saved by a fellow passenger knowing to tilt their head back immediately. This year, one of the focusses of first aid health and safety has been the development of online courses and kit sales. Teaching first aid in the workplace continues to grow as a business.

MORE ABOUT FIRST AID

Save-a-mate trial success in Queensland

Red Cross save-a-mate Program provides support and education to young people on key health issues, particularly those relating to alcohol and other drugs and mental health.

This year we trialled an innovative pilot called SAM Our Way, which ran in partnership with beyondblue: the national depression initiative and addressed the emotional and social wellbeing of young Aboriginal people living in remote communities. Working with six remote communities in Queensland, a number of issues were explored that related to alcohol and other drugs, mental health, sexual health, violence, nutrition, self esteem and communication.

MORE ABOUT SAVE-A-MATE

Working with six remote communities in Queensland, a number of issues were explored that related to alcohol and other drugs, mental health, sexual health, violence, nutrition, self esteem and communication.
Safe in South Australia

Mac Kur was born not in a safe hospital bed surrounded by nurses and midwives, but in a refugee camp in Kenya to the sound of gunfire ringing into the middle of the night.

His Dad, Samuel, says Mac’s older brother clearly remembers the sound.

‘It’s one of the things children are not supposed to know or hear about – violence, shootings…,’ he says.

Now, Mac lives in South Australia and is one of hundreds of students at Ingle Farm School who have completed the Red Cross New Arrivals Program, which teaches refugee and migrant students English language skills for living and studying in South Australia.

Support for children who have experienced significant trauma includes a specialist teacher psychologist for students with special needs, trauma support, as well as Community Liaison Officers to support links between schools and parents or caregivers.

Ingle Farm School principal David O’Brien says the make-up of the school has changed remarkably in recent years.

Enrolments have more than doubled and now include children of an indigenous background and children from 42 countries speaking 38 languages.

Many of the children who have completed the Red Cross Program go on to help the new kids with interpreting language.

‘It’s about survival,’ says David. ‘They understand and take responsibility for each other and their own learning. I think at times we underestimate a child’s ability to take responsibility.’

David says one of the most powerful things to promote understanding between students is encouraging each child to tell their story.

‘They talk about where they’ve been, why they’re here and where they’ve come from. Once you have that better and deeper understanding, you seem to have a deeper cultural awareness.’

Supporting prison visitors in Victoria

Megan’s family is like many others. After separating from her husband five years ago, Megan and her three children live on their own.

But even though Megan’s relationship with her husband is amicable and the children’s bond with their father is strong, they can never phone him.

Megan has to organise a visit the week before. They drive for two-and-a-half hours to visit him, but he’s not able to reciprocate.

Megan’s husband is halfway through a four-year sentence for a ‘white collar’ crime.

‘It’s been extremely difficult for the children, because their father was very active in their lives,’ says Megan (not her real name).

Luckily, Megan had the confidence to ask the Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders for help. The organisation provided her daughter with counselling through a privately funded pilot project, which Megan believes probably saved her life.

If families are supported to keep in contact with their loved one while they’re serving time, that person’s return to the community is often more successful and they are less likely to re-offend.

Red Cross is running a pilot program which provides information and emotional support to families and friends visiting inmates at Port Phillip Prison in Laverton.

In partnership with the Association and Port Phillip Prison, the pilot was launched earlier this year. Volunteers in the prison’s visitor centre provide reassurance and emotional support, information on visiting procedures, links to specialist support agencies and services, and resources to occupy children.
addressing the impact of migration
Many refugees find it difficult adjusting to life in unfamiliar surrounds and face challenges in making a new start. Red Cross is easing this transition for a group of African refugees living in Newcastle. The aim is to improve the community’s understanding of refugee culture and experience through excursions, skills-based training, health and wellbeing education, recreation and social culture programs. It encourages men to tell their stories, and creates a forum to share their experiences with locals.

‘To help us integrate I started Sudanese basketball teams here in Newcastle so that young Sudanese could meet other young Australians. That is an easy way to integrate. Let us respect each other and let us join hands and work together for our lovely country.’

– Kwabo Batende from Congo
Stephania and the children came to Australia as refugees in 2005, but she never lost hope of being reunited with her husband.

Reuniting families torn apart by war

Clement Honda met his son David for the first time in November 2007 – four years after he was separated from his family while fleeing militias in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Clement, a medical worker, and his wife Stephania had run a community clinic and pharmacy. But when rival militias wanting to recruit him invaded their home, Clement, fearing for his life, was forced to flee to Uganda, leaving then-pregnant Stephania and their two children behind. After surviving three more home invasions they also fled across the border, but were unable to find Clement.

Stephania and the children came to Australia as refugees in 2005, but she never lost hope of being reunited with her husband. Both she and Clement approached Red Cross in the hope of finding each other.

Clement, who was found in Uganda working for Médecins Sans Frontières, had an emotional reunion with Stephania and their children at Sydney Airport late last year. They are now living in Yagoona, Sydney.

Hungarian family reunited

Erno Mathe was just two years old when his parents Helen and Tibor left him in the care of his grandparents during the 1956 Hungarian Revolution.

As they crossed the border into Austria, they thought the family would soon be reunited. But the borders were closed, and they were unable to return to their homeland – or contact their family. In 1959, Helen and Tibor immigrated to Australia.

It was 51 years before they tracked their son down through Red Cross. Within a year of contacting us Hungarian Red Cross had sent a letter advising they had found Erno, who was reunited with his parents in Australia in 2007.

2,085 tracing cases handled by Red Cross in Australia
19 million people worldwide have fled their homelands and can’t go back as they fear persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion or social group.

Making food and friends in Western Australia

Can-openers and multigrain sandwiches were exotic items for a group of African women when they arrived in Belmont, Perth. Now they’re making healthy lunchboxes for their children and opening cans with abandon.

‘We learn how to cook nutritious food, learn how to socialise,’ says Claudine Ntbagize, who arrived in Perth from Tanzania with her two children a year ago and was encouraged to attend our weekly meetings.

Some women walk for up to ten kilometres to reach the community centre where we share basic cooking skills with newly arrived migrants to make the transition to life in Australia easier.

The women switch between Arabic, Swahili and English, and we have translated all the food names, so they know what to look and shop for. And they have some fun in the process, using the Friday meetings to socialise and build friendships.

‘Life is getting on well, when I first came life was quite challenging, now life is going right. I still eat the same food as I did before, but now I know more, I have more to choose from at the supermarket. I still cook Tanzanian food, but I have learnt how to cook pizza, beans and other vegetables too,’ says Claudine.

Sudan’s vital feeding centres

‘Children are discharged only when they reach their target weight, their appetite has returned and they are free from diseases like malaria and diarrhoea. It’s very rewarding to see children progress from being critically ill, with no appetite, to well and happy,’ says Ruth Jebb, Red Cross nurse.

Up to 300 severely malnourished children are treated every day at the feeding centre we run jointly with British Red Cross near the displaced persons camp in Gereida, southern Darfur, Sudan. Run in partnership with the International Committee of the Red Cross, it employs 18 local staff, including internally displaced people.

More about the response in Sudan

Gereida, Sudan. A locally employed nutrition monitor nurse and her team go around the camp to check children for malnutrition. Photo: © ICRC/Boris Heger

2,300 asylum seekers assisted in Australia

More about the asylum seeker assistance scheme
‘Red Cross is unequivocal in its commitment to working, for the long term, in respectful partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to address disadvantage. Red Cross does not see itself as substituting for Aboriginal led and controlled services but rather as part of interim (albeit medium to long term) strategies that contribute to capacity development and improved socio-economic well-being of Indigenous Australians.’

Olga Havnen, Head of Indigenous Strategy.
Death rates are around 5 times higher for Aboriginal children than for non-Aboriginal children.

Life expectancy and health in Aboriginal communities is worse than many developing countries.
tackling entrenched locational disadvantage
‘Before I retired I had a property and was more or less physically isolated, so it has been a new experience for me mixing with other people and socialising.

‘At the moment I’m quite active so I like to try to get chaps living by themselves out to socialise and not vegetate and generally enjoy getting involved in whatever activity is on the go.’

– Keith Green is part of the Red Cross Roma men’s program in Queensland
Healthy start to the day

Coolgardie is half an hour from Kalgoorlie in the red desert of Western Australia.

Many children travel thousands of kilometres from the remote Kimberley to study here, and the behavioural differences between them and local students is huge.

‘We know the boarders have a genuine breakfast every day,’ says principal Nad Murugan, who sees greater levels of concentration and fewer disciplinary problems in the boarders.

To encourage a better start to the day for local students, who might otherwise skip their morning meal, Red Cross Good Start Breakfast Club offers a good feed and a yarn with volunteers in the canteen before school.

It also means they’re more likely to be on time, and with toast, cereal and fruit in their bellies, they’re more settled in class.

‘Breakfast Club stabilises their behaviour, and their results improve,’ says Nad.

A growing number of primary school students poke their heads into the canteen window from 8am offering to help the volunteers set up. ‘I like helping and getting it all set up for breakfast,’ says one student. This in turn encourages adult volunteers who can offer a different perspective on daily life.

‘They have to have a relationship with the students, or they’ll never turn up,’ says Nad. He says it’s all about sitting down together to talk, share and listen to each other – which helps break down barriers and form friendships across all age ranges.

Most importantly, it’s giving children a healthy start: ‘I like Breakfast Club because I get to eat bananas and apples and play games, and you can have yoghurt too,’ says six-year-old Ruby.

260 Good Start Breakfast Clubs serving more than 650,000 meals annually

Students from Seaforth, WA enjoy a healthy start to the day. Photo: Australian Red Cross/Rodney Dekker
Save-a-mate in Wimmera

Like many parts of rural and regional Australia, the Wimmera in north-western Victoria is experiencing ongoing drought, which considerably affects farming families and the wider community. Drought commonly results in higher unemployment, an increase in rural poverty, less access to education, health and welfare services and widespread stress and mental health problems.

Young people in regional and rural Victoria experience higher rates of drug and alcohol use and mental health problems than their metropolitan counterparts.

To combat these issues, the Wimmera community has embraced a Red Cross youth education program that teaches young people how to recognise, prevent and respond to emergencies resulting from alcohol and other drug use.

The save-a-mate program encourages young people to take responsibility for themselves, their friends and others around them and meets a need in the region identified through extensive community consultation and research on health demographics.

At the heart of the save-a-mate program is the Alcohol and Other Drugs Emergency Course, designed to equip participants with the skills and knowledge to look after themselves and to provide potentially life-saving support to their mates and others.

Young volunteers will be trained and supported to deliver the emergency course to young people in schools, community centres and sporting clubs in and around Edenhope, Horsham, Minyip, Nhill and Warracknabeal.

The program in the Wimmera is jointly funded by the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust and two bequests from Red Cross members. It will be implemented over an initial three-year period, during which more than 3,000 young people will benefit through participation in the emergencies course.

‘We work with families within their traditional cultural structures to identify why malnutrition is a problem and how it can be overcome.’

Combating malnutrition in Australia

When Nancy Gudaltji returns from hunting on Elcho Island, she hopes to be carrying yams, stingrays, turtles and fish to cook on the open fire.

With one expensive supermarket and two take-away shops to serve 2,200 people, malnutrition is a problem in the remote Galiwin’ku community, a couple of hours by plane from Darwin.

‘It’s hard to get fresh fruit,’ says Nancy, who finds hunting is a good way to supplement the diet.

Also helping to combat malnutrition is Breakfast Club in a Box, which takes nutrition into the homes of Aboriginal people living on the tip of the Northern Territory. ‘We work with families within their traditional cultural structures to identify why malnutrition is a problem and how it can be overcome,’ explains Tom Redston, of Red Cross.

Breakfast Club in a Box is a community-developed idea rapidly expanding throughout Galiwin’ku with the help of enthusiastic volunteers from 10 family groups.

Each clan is given three robust plastic boxes: one for utensils, one with soap, towels and a bowl for washing, and the third for food that is replenished weekly. Each kit feeds about 20 children every day.
Learning to cook in the outback

Tanya is getting out in 22 days. She’s sitting at a long table chopping vegetables in the maximum security kitchen at Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison in Western Australia.

A group of female prisoners meets here every Friday to talk food and nutrition, and to prepare cheap, healthy meals with the help of Red Cross.

Tanya, who raised four kids on a tight budget in Kalgoorlie, is a natural and we want her to become a Red Cross volunteer facilitator when she’s back on the outside.

‘My daughter is expecting a baby soon, and I’ve got a job teaching young mums to prepare quick and easy meals – inexpensive ones,’ she says, barely containing her smile.

Around her, four women with aprons over their mustard-coloured uniforms are sizing up the ingredients for lunch.

Chicken breasts (mimi) wouldn’t usually be on the menu for a cheap and healthy meal, says program manager Kaye McLennan, so the women imagine preparing brush turkey (kiparra), goanna (murlumaru), rabbit (nani), red meat (kuka) or roo (marlu). In any case, this recipe may be useful when meat is on special at the supermarket.

Today, the women are learning how to make a meal go further.

Feeding a big family on a small budget can be a challenge, and these weekly sessions demonstrate how to save money and be resourceful, as well as focusing on healthy eating and preparing easy and tasty meals.

When they get out of prison, these women will take what they’ve learned into their communities and pack as much nutritional value as possible into each meal.

Tanya goes back to her cell and returns holding two small paintings. The first tells the story of a hunter who is travelling in search of food. A snake beats him to it, so the hunter finds only animal tracks at each waterhole.

The second painting is about honey ants and the women’s hands that dig for the honey.

‘With food, it’s easy to tell a story,’ says Tanya. ‘Because more or less that’s what Aboriginal people did in the olden days. Food has always been a tradition – they could live off the land, they didn’t have corner stores or pubs.’

In a couple of months, the group will spend a weekend out bush, talking about food and making contact with the land. Tanya, who will be out of prison by then, plans to lead the group.

‘We’ll go bush looking for witchetty grubs (paarti), silky pear (karlkurli), bush banana.’

And will they dig for honey ants?

‘You can find them from here straight up to Warburton,’ she says. ‘They nest under a tree. Take a step back and start digging under the nest. It’s a rich honey that the ladies used to go out and dig for and they still do. Other Aboriginal cultures might be disappearing, but out here, ours is still alive.’

*names have been changed to protect the identity of the women at Eastern Regional Goldfields Prison

In Australia, an estimated five to eight per cent of the population endures times without food or money to buy food. In areas of high disadvantage, this is significantly higher, and it is children who are often most vulnerable.
Health awareness in the Solomons

Pritus Iro throws her head back and laughs, momentarily forgetting the daily challenges she and the women of her village face.

The mother of two, who lives in the remote coastal village of Manakwai in the Solomon Islands, is undertaking health awareness training.

She eats potato and cabbage for breakfast before joining the other women for the long walk to their gardens in the mountains – a journey of two to three hours.

‘Most of the day we spend in the garden getting our food,’ says Pritus, who grows green peppers, eggplant, beans, tomatoes, coconuts and pawpaws. ‘Then we carry the food and tools back around 3 o’clock.’

The women need to be strong – they carry everything back to the village in 20kg rice bags, with firewood dragging behind them.

And sometimes they go fishing for the evening meal.

The women also prepare the food, so improving health and hygiene through simple practices such as covering food and washing hands is important to reduce the incidence of diarrhoea and skin infections.

‘Many people are learning to be more aware,’ says Pritus. ‘And they are starting to do what they have learned.’

MORE ABOUT OUR PROGRAMS IN THE SOLOMONS
Monrovia, Liberia. The main prison. The treatment of prisoners of war falls under international humanitarian law.

Photo: © ICRC/Boris Heger
‘The idea expressed by international humanitarian law is simple and compelling: even wars have limits.’

– Dr Helen Durham
Program Director for Research and Development
Asia Pacific Centre for Military Law
Even wars have limits

It was with this basic but essential idea in mind that we produced a handbook for Australian parliamentarians this year. The handbook was produced as part of our role in disseminating International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and will assist a range of public officials to develop wider community understanding of ‘the laws of war’.

While the executive arm of government has primary responsibility for Australia’s International Humanitarian Law obligations, Parliament also has a critical role to play by enacting legislation that ensures IHL is legally binding in Australia. Parliamentarians also play a crucial role as opinion leaders within the broader community and have unique capacities to raise matters of concern and educate the public on important international legal principles.

We greatly value the assistance received from members of all political parties and independents in state, territory and national parliaments for our humanitarian work in Australia and internationally.

We thank them for being friends of Red Cross and hope the handbook will be a useful tool for building relationships with parliamentary representatives throughout the world, in order to add legitimacy to the message ‘even wars have limits’.

MORE ABOUT THE PARLIAMENTARIAN’S HANDBOOK

Cover of Australian Red Cross International Humanitarian Law Handbook.

Photo: © ICRC/Boris Heger
Working towards a ban on cluster bombs

Courageous survivors of cluster bomb explosions travelled from around the world to Dublin in May to witness the writing of an historic International Humanitarian Law treaty that bans the use of these inaccurate and unreliable weapons.

During the Vietnam War at least 250 million cluster bombs were dropped on Laos, littering almost a third of the country with up to 78 million unexploded munitions. The story is one of many. Since the Second World War, innocent civilians in 21 countries have had to live with unexploded ‘bomblets’.

Since 2000, the International Committee of the Red Cross has called for a ban on inaccurate and unreliable cluster munitions which do not conform to the basic principles of International Humanitarian Law. National Societies around the world, including Australian Red Cross, have called on their governments to address this issue as a matter of International Humanitarian Law.

Representatives of 110 countries attended the Dublin conference, the culmination of years of lobbying for an end to the use of these weapons. Australian Red Cross was there to participate in the process. At the end of two weeks of intensive debate, a treaty was agreed that will put an immediate stop to the use of these weapons as well as their production, development, stockpiling, or transfer.

Since our CEO first witnessed the devastating effects of these weapons after the conflict in South Lebanon in June 2006, we have been raising awareness and highlighting the need for international action.

This year, the International Humanitarian Law program ran seminars and information sessions across the country and a magazine on the issue was published and sent out nationally. So inspired were the Youth Advisory Committee in Victoria that they ran a film night featuring a documentary of the situation in Laos.

Importantly, the treaty includes the strongest-ever agreed provision to assist affected people – ensuring that areas are cleared as quickly as possible and that those affected and their families get assistance to rebuild their lives.

The treaty will be open for signature on 2 – 3 December 2008 in Oslo. Red Cross will encourage governments to honour the spirit of the Dublin conference and to live up to their obligations under International Humanitarian Law to limit the impact of conflict on civilians.

MORE ABOUT INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

Laotian children living in areas heavily affected by cluster munitions play act during an education session about staying safe. Photo: © ICRC/J Holmes

250 million cluster bombs were dropped on Laos during the Vietnam War
Financial snapshot

Where the money comes from

Where the money comes from
(Excluding Red Cross Blood Service)

- Community Support Income: 11%
- Government Grant Income: 10%
- Other Income: 79%

Where the money goes

This graph shows that almost 90 per cent of money goes to programs that directly support vulnerable people. Other cost areas include the direction of funds to retail and other activities that generate income for programs at 5 per cent, administration of programs and income generating activities at 4 per cent and the cost of supporting fundraising at 3 per cent.

Where the program money is spent

Where the program money is spent
(Excluding Red Cross Blood Service)

- Australian Services: 17%
- Asia Quake and Tsunami: 5%
- Other International Programs: 4%
- Blood Service: 65%

The two graphs above illustrate income for Australian Red Cross. The first graph includes some $395.4 million government funding for the operation of the Australian Red Cross Blood Service. The second graph shows the source of income for the humanitarian work of Australian Red Cross both in Australia and overseas.

Community support income is money received from the Australian public, whether by public donations, third party community fundraising, corporate supporters, bequests, events or income from members.

Government grant income includes funding from local, state and Federal Government for specific programs including considerable AusAID support for international programs.

Other income relates to income generated through investments, income generating activities such as retail shops, first aid training and the sale of merchandise.

Australian services include domestic community services and support and other international programs represent our work primarily in Asia Pacific. Asia Quake and Tsunami relates to the ongoing recovery work primarily in Indonesia and also in the Maldives and Sri Lanka.

FULL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
The essence of Red Cross is people helping people.
This graph illustrates the tremendous amount of support we receive from volunteers, members and supporters. It throws into stark contrast the relatively small number of paid staff and the large number of people who give of their time and resources to help people in need.

**Figures as at 30 June 2008.**
**Actual number of employees, not FTE equivalent.**

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**In summary**

Our gross revenue has increased by $11.3 million (2007: $118.8 million to 2008: $130.1 million) due to an increase in the demand for our services to the Australian community.

The Society has experienced an increase in costs of $29.5 million (2007: $119.6 million to 2008: $149.1 million) of which $19 million is consistent with an increased demand on our services.

Significant outlays on infrastructure and efficiency improvements contributed $6 million to total expenditure.

During the year, $24.3 million was spent on reconstruction, livelihood and disaster preparation for Tsunami affected regions.

Specific Purpose Funds – International Projects have recorded a substantial surplus of $15.3 million this year due to the generosity of donors to the China Earthquake ($7.4 million), Myanmar (Burma) Cyclone ($4.4 million) Appeals and AusAID funding for Sudan emergencies of $3.8 million.

Specific Purpose Funds – Domestic Operations have seen a significant amount transferred this year ($7.4 million) from the gross operating surplus to fulfil delivery of programs that the Society has received funding for in advance.

The Australian Red Cross Blood Service recorded a surplus of $14.7 million, compared with a deficit of $3.2 million last year, largely due to receiving funds in advance of capital projects.
First National helps build stronger communities

Red Cross thanks the First National Foundation for its valuable support of our emergency services work in Australia. In a multifaceted three-year partnership, the Foundation is providing a minimum of $1.2 million, along with significant promotional assistance for Emergency REDIPlan: a Red Cross community information program to help people in Australia to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies more effectively.

This year, as well as facilitating the production and distribution of timely and practical recovery advice to over 15,000 flood-affected homes in Queensland, the Foundation’s support has enabled the development of a range of important resources to help improve emergency readiness in households across the country.

Available through Red Cross offices, participating First National Real Estate offices and online, these resources contain universally relevant and easy-to-follow preparedness messages based on four simple steps. Red Cross appreciates First National’s assistance in ensuring that as many households as possible receive this information to help build stronger, more emergency-ready communities Australia-wide.

The First National Foundation is a Red Cross National Humanity Partner, the highest level of partnership available.

› MORE ABOUT REDIPLAN
Thanks

For their commitment to our humanitarian work, Red Cross acknowledges the following:

National Partners

National Humanity Partners

- Lovatts Publications
- Mallesons Stephen Jaques
- Sanitarium
- United Group Limited

National Community Partners

- Australian Meat Industry Council (AMIC)
- Bank of Queensland
- beyondblue
- BHP Billiton Nickel West
- BlueScope Steel
- Bryan Byrt Holdings
- Domino’s Pizza
- Dynamic Supplies
- EnergyAustralia
- Foodbank SA
- HBOS Australia Foundation
- Janesce Pty Ltd
- Leighton Contractors
- Lotterywest
- National Australia Bank
- RAC WA

National Unity Partners

- Aston Business Community
- Australian Loyalty Partners

- Australian Egg Corporation
- RSM Bird Cameron
- Savings and Loans Credit Union

Major State/Territory Corporate Supporters

- Australian Meat Industry Council (AMIC)
- Bank of Queensland
- beyondblue
- BHP Billiton Nickel West
- BlueScope Steel
- Bryan Byrt Holdings
- Domino’s Pizza
- Dynamic Supplies
- EnergyAustralia
- Foodbank SA
- HBOS Australia Foundation
- Janesce Pty Ltd
- Leighton Contractors
- Lotterywest
- National Australia Bank
- RAC WA

Major Trust & Foundation Supporters

- Adolph Basser Trust*
- Collier Charitable Fund
- Edward Corbould Charitable Trust*
- Estate of the late Cecil Thomas Shannon*
- Fred P Archer Trust (administered by Trust)
- Gardiner Foundation
- Gold Fields Australian Foundation Incorporated
- Jean & Redvers Dunbar Foundation*
- John & Thirza Daley Charitable Trust*
- John T Reid Charitable Trust
- Ken & Alse Chilton Charitable Trust*
- Lady Proud Foundation
- Lord Mayor’s Community Trust (Brisbane)
- Profield Foundation
- Tasmanian Community Fund
- The Colin Bisdee Trust
- The Estate of the late Bruce Wall
- William Angliss (Victoria) Charitable Fund
* Administered by Perpetual

Major Corporate Donors to China Sichuan Earthquake Appeal 2008

- BlueScope Steel
- Liberty International Underwriters
- Minmetals Australia
- Members Equity Bank
- nabCapital

Major Corporate Donors to Myanmar (Burma) Cyclone Appeal 2008

- BlueScope Steel
- Liberty International Underwriters
- Minmetals Australia
- Members Equity Bank
- PricewaterhouseCoopers Foundation

**MORE ABOUT BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS**
Major government donors to Myanmar (Burma) Cyclone Appeal 2008

Department of Premier and Cabinet WA ($1 million)
Department of Premier and Cabinet NSW ($500k)
Department of Premier and Cabinet Victoria ($500k)
Department of Premier and Cabinet Queensland ($300k)
Government of South Australia ($200k)
Government of Tasmania ($100k)
Government of Australian Capital Territory ($50k)

Major government donors to China Sichuan Earthquake Appeal 2008

Department of Premier and Cabinet WA ($1 million)
Department of Premier and Cabinet Victoria ($500k)
NSW Premier’s Department ($500k)
Government of South Australia ($200k)
Department of the Chief Minister NT ($100k)
Government of Tasmania ($100k)
Government of Australian Capital Territory ($50k)

Major government supporters – international and Australia-wide programs

Federal Government Departments & Agencies

Australian Agency for International Development
Australian Federal Police
Attorney General’s Department
Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
Department of Education, Science and Training
Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
Department of Health and Ageing
Department of Immigration and Citizenship
Emergency Management Australia

State Government Departments, Local Councils & Agencies

Australian Capital Territory
ACT Health
Department of Disability Housing and Community Services
Chief Minister’s Department

New South Wales
Attorney General’s Department of NSW
Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care
Department of Community Services
Housing NSW
NSW Health

Northern Territory
Department of Chief Minister
Department of Health and Families
Department of Local Government, Housing and Sport
Police, Fire and Emergency Services

Queensland
Department of Communities
Department of Education, Training and the Arts
Department of Employment and Industrial Relations
Department of Natural Resources
Department of the Premier and Cabinet
Disability Services Queensland
Queensland Health
Queensland Treasury

South Australia
City of Onkaparinga
Department for Families and Communities
Department of Health
Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure

Tasmania
Department of Health and Human Services
Department of Premier and Cabinet
State Government of Tasmania

Victoria
Department of Justice
Department of Planning and Community Development
Services and Indigenous Affairs

Western Australia
Department for Child Protection
Department of Health
Department of Education and Training
Disability Services Commission

Local Government
Brisbane City Council
Special thanks to all our valued donors, members, volunteers, staff and people who left a bequest to Red Cross in the past year.
Fundamental Principles

In all activities our volunteers and staff are guided by the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

**Humanity**

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, co-operation and lasting peace amongst all people.

**Impartiality**

It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

**Neutrality**

In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

**Independence**

The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

**Voluntary service**

It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

**Unity**

There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

**Universality**

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.
How can you help?

Make a donation
Phone 1800 811 700 or online at www.redcross.org.au

Help save three lives
Give blood today. To make an appointment call 13 14 95 or visit www.donateblood.com.au

Volunteer
Time is fast becoming our most precious asset, but volunteer roles are becoming more flexible and fulfilling. Volunteer roles range from making a five-minute phone call a day to someone living alone to helping families learn to budget and plan their finances more efficiently. Go to www.redcross.org.au for more information.

Become a regular giver
Making a commitment to bring about change in the lives of vulnerable people is easy. Simply nominate an amount you feel comfortable with and it is deducted from your account each month – we will stay in close contact to let you know your donation is making a difference. Join online at www.redcross.org.au or phone 1800 812 018.

Become a corporate partner
There are many ways in which your business can support and benefit from a relationship with the Red Cross brand:
- cause related marketing initiatives
- workplace giving
- staff engagement
- pro bono and in kind support
For more information email corpsupport@redcross.org.au

Become a member
You can join over 100 million people worldwide by becoming a member of Red Cross. You can get involved in volunteering, representing your region or simply showing your support for the world’s largest humanitarian organisation. For more information ring your local Red Cross Office.

Leave a gift in your will
Increasingly people are including a gift in their will as well as taking care of their families. We can help you to plan for a bequest and prepare your will professionally so that you can leave a lasting legacy for generations to come. Phone 1800 811 700 for more information or ring your local Red Cross office for a confidential discussion.

› SIGN UP AS A REGULAR DONOR
› MAKE AN ONLINE DONATION
› MORE ABOUT HOW YOU CAN HELP
Red Cross Governance

Formation and incorporation

Australian Red Cross was initially formed as a branch of British Red Cross in 1914, and was incorporated by Royal Charter in 1941. Supplemental Charters and new Rules were made in 1961, 1999, 2005 and 2008 with the consent of the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia.

Council of the Society

The Council meets once a year at the Annual General Meeting.

The Council elects the members to the Australian Red Cross Board, appoints auditors and also has the right to amend the Charter and Rules (subject to final approval by the Governor-General).

The membership is made up as follows:

The President

- 28 voting members – the Chairman, the Vice Chairman, the Chairman of the Audit and Risk Management Committee, a Youth representative, the Chairman of each of the eight State and Territory offices and 16 representatives taken from the States and Territories.
- Up to seven non-voting members – the President and a maximum of six Vice Presidents.

Council Members 2007 – 8

President
Her Excellency Mrs Marlena Jeffery

Vice-Presidents
John Pinney AM
Richard Dunn (from Nov 07)
Rod Martin
Rod McKinnon ESM
Margot Stretch AM
James Kostoglou
Jim Forwood (to Nov 07)

All Board Members (see over)

Divisional Representatives

Lauren Nelson and Sam Wong AM
ACT Division
John Fries (to Nov 07),
John MacLennan (from Nov 07)
and Robyn Rooth
NSW Division
Foster Stavridis and
Belinda Peacocke
NT Division
Tony Pixley (to Nov 07),
Winifred Smith (from Nov 07)
and Katherine Wall
QLD Division
Clementine Penninger (to Nov 07),
Pam Simmons (from Nov 07) and
Paul Shinkfield
SA Division
Lyndal Herbert,
Scott Harvey (to Nov 07)
TAS Division
John Hood (to Nov 07),
Helene Hayes (from Nov 07) and
Gillian Abbott
VIC Division
Betty Smith-Gander OAM and
Ross Watson (to Nov 07) and
Dianne Buckles (from Nov 07)
WA Division

MORE ABOUT OUR ORGANISATION STRUCTURE
The Board consists of 12 persons – four elected office bearers and a representative appointed from each of the Divisions. Two additional Board Members were first appointed to the Board in July 2006. The Chair of the Australian Red Cross Blood Service Board is also a member ex officio, bringing the maximum total membership to 15.

Board Members 2007 – 8

Greg Vickery AM
Chairman

Michael Legge
Vice Chairman

Ross Pinney
Chairman, Audit and Risk Management Committee

Katherine Ngo (to April 08)
Youth Representative

Vinay Menon (from April 08)
Youth Representative

Kaye Hogan AM PSM
ACT Divisional Chairman

Alan Clayton
QLD Divisional Chairman

Richard Dunn (to Nov 07)
NSW Divisional Chairman

John Fries (from Nov 07)
NSW Divisional Chairman

John Reeves (to Nov 07)
NT Divisional Chairman

Deven Patel (from Nov 07)
NT Divisional Chairman

Pam Simmons
SA Divisional Rep

Michael Howarth
TAS Divisional Chairman

Richard Stone (to Nov 07)
VIC Divisional Chairman

John Hood (from Nov 07)
VIC Divisional Chairman

Ian Anson
WA Divisional Chairman

David Hamill
Chairman, Australian Red Cross Blood Service Board

Additional Board Members

Jill Lester (until Feb 08)

Kate Carnell AO

Lowitja O’Donoghue
AM CBE (from April 08)
Office Bearers (effective as at June 2008)

Greg Vickery
AM BA/LLB (UQ)
Chairman
Gerg Vickery was first elected Chairman in 2003 and has extensive legal, education and Red Cross experience. Mr Vickery has served on the Queensland Divisional Board, including the role of Chairman (1998-2002), on the Australian Red Cross Blood Service Board and as a member of the Australian Red Cross Board and Council. Professionally he is a Senior Partner and Brisbane Chairman of Deacons Lawyers and specialises in company law. He also holds positions as Adjunct Professor in Law at the University of Queensland and member of the national Companies and Markets Advisory Committee. He is also a court-appointed mediator and arbitrator, and a member of the Key Centre for Ethics Law Justice and Governance.

Michael Legge
Vice Chairman
Michael Legge was elected Vice Chairman in 2003 after joining Australian Red Cross in 1986. He has been a member of the Tasmanian Divisional Council and Finance Committee and was Deputy Chairman of the Division in 1998 and Chairman in 1999. Mr Legge has been a member of the Australian Red Cross Blood Service Board since 2001 and manages a diverse agricultural business and is a Director/Chairman of several organisations. Michael was appointed Chairman of the Board’s International Committee in April 2008.

Ross Pinney
Chairman, Audit & Risk Management Committee
Ross Pinney was elected as Chairman of the Audit and Risk Management Committee and Board member on 1 March 2007, after being a member of the Victorian Division Board since 2005. He has a distinguished background in both public and private sectors. Most recently, he worked for fifteen years as a senior manager at National Australia Bank, working as Executive General Manager in the Office of the CEO, CEO Europe, and Executive General Manager, Products and Services. Prior to that, he was Chief General Manager, Operations at the Accident Compensation Commission in Victoria, and served in a number of positions including Controller, Revenue at the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, after starting his career as an accountant at Arthur Andersen & Co. Ross was elected as a member of the IFRC’s Finance Commission in 2007. His other board appointments include Superpartners Pty Ltd. Ross has an MBA from RMIT, a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Melbourne, and is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia.

Katherine Ngo
Youth Representative (to April 08)
Katherine Ngo is a medical student, Inspire Foundation Youth Ambassador and table tennis player. She first met Australian Red Cross through the trauma teddy and has continued this relationship through the Sydney University Red Cross society, Tasmanian Youth Reference Group and as the Tasmanian tiger on the National Youth Advisory Committee. Katherine aims to introduce Red Cross to other young people as a space where their dreams, optimism and ideas can be harnessed to solve any problem.

Vinay Menon
Youth Representative (from April 08)
Vinay Menon was elected the Board Youth Representative and Chairman of the National Youth Advisory Committee in April 2008. He is 21 years old and studies medicine at the University of Western Australia. He has been involved with Red Cross since age 17 through programs including Lady Lawley Cottage, save a mate, Emergency Services, Soup Patrol, Reach Your Potential, and World Aware. Vinay has volunteered overseas in health and education programs in Turkey and India, and has been involved with many NGOs. He is passionate about harnessing the unique abilities and enthusiasm of young people for social justice causes. In 2008 Vinay received the WA Governor’s Youth Citizen of the Year Award and a Red Cross Service Award.
Divisional Representatives

Kaye Hogan AM PSM Chairman ACT Division (from Nov 06)

Kaye Hogan joined Australian Red Cross in 1981 and was elected Chairman, ACT in 2006, served as Deputy Chairman 1999 – 2003 and was appointed to the Australian Red Cross Blood Service Board in 2003. She has extensive nursing and health management experience and has undertaken missions in Thailand/Cambodia and Pakistan for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). She is a management consultant – health services policy and operations and a Surveyor for The Australian Council on Healthcare Standards. Previous roles include Executive Director of Nursing, Woden Valley/The Canberra Hospital and Board Member, Royal College of Nursing Australia. Kaye is currently a Member of both Australian Defence and Department of Veterans Affairs Human Research Ethics Committees. She is a member of professional organisations including the Australian College of Health Service Executives, The Australian and New Zealand Society of Blood Transfusion and the Australian Infection Control Association.

Richard Dunn FCFA Chairman NSW Division (to Nov 07)

Before taking up a position as Corporate Governance Director with a Management Services organisation, Richard Dunn was the Director, Internal Audit for the State Rail Authority, and prior to that was Assistant Auditor General in the New South Wales Auditor General’s Office. He is a past member of the Australian Society of Certified Practising Accountants Public Sector Accounting Centre of Excellence. Mr Dunn was Chair of the Australian Red Cross NSW Division from 2003 to 2007 and has held a range of Council and Executive positions in the NSW Division since 1995.

John Fries Chairman NSW Division (from Nov 07)

John Fries joined the board of Australian Red Cross NSW in 2000 and was Honorary Treasurer from 2003 and Deputy Chair from 2005. He was elected as Chairman in 2007. He is also the Chairman of Fox Invest Limited and is a Director of Strathfield Group and Viscopy Limited. His last full time employment was as Finance Director of Vodafone Australia Ltd. With a background in finance and administration, John has held director positions with public listed companies including Tribeca Learning Limited, McIlwraith McEarcharn Limited, Mcllwraith McEarcharn Limited, Oakbridge Limited and Great Northern Mining N.L. John holds an Honours degree in Commerce, is a Fellow of the Australian Society of Certified Practising Accountants, and a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

John Reeves QC Chairman NT Division (to Nov 07)

John Reeves has practised as a barrister in Darwin for 20 years and was appointed a QC in 1997. Mr Reeves was Chairman of the NT Bar Association from 2000 – 7 and Vice President of the Australian Bar Association from 2004 – 7. Mr Reeves was a member of the House of Representatives 1983 – 1984 representing NT. Mr Reeves joined the Council of the NT Division of Red Cross in 1998 and was elected Deputy Chairman in 2002 and Chairman in 2003.

Devendra Patel Chairman NT Division (from Nov 07)

Devendra’s involvement with Red Cross dates back to 1978, when he was a junior auditor with KPMG doing the audit of the NT Division. He became the engagement partner for the audit in 1986. During this period he was impressed by the work of Red Cross and started volunteering as a driver during doorknock appeals and generally supported Red Cross by attending auctions and fundraising events. KPMG’s appointment as auditors was terminated in 1992 when auditors were appointed nationally. This opened up an opportunity for Devenandra to join the Council in 1992. On the retirement of the then treasurer in 1994 Devenandra was elected as the honorary treasurer, the position that he continued to hold till 2006 when he accepted the position of Deputy Chairman. He was elected Chairman in 2007.

Alan Clayton Chairman QLD Division (from Nov 05)

Alan Clayton joined Red Cross in 1979 as a foundation member of the QLD IHL Advisory Committee and was its chair from 1992 until 2005. He was elected to the Board in 1999 and has held positions on, and chaired a number of, Divisional committees. Mr Clayton was elected Queensland Division Chairman in 2005. Mr Clayton has had more than 37 years experience in senior educational management and policy positions within the Queensland Public Service. Though retired, he continues to practise as an educational consultant.
Pam Simmons
SA Divisional Representative
(from Nov 06)

Pam Simmons joined the SA Divisional Board in 2004. Pam is currently the Guardian for Children and Young People in South Australia and is formerly the Executive Director of the SA Council for Social Service, the state’s major advocacy body for social justice. Her work experience is largely with non-government organisations in Australia, Thailand and England and she has qualifications in social work, public policy and administration.

Michael Howarth
Chairman TAS Division
(from Nov 06)

Mike Howarth joined Red Cross as the ADF representative on the Tasmanian Division’s IHL Committee. He has served as a member of that committee for over a decade and was its Chairman for the last six years. During that time he was appointed to the Divisional Council and was elected Deputy Chairman in October 2004, and then Chairman in November 2006. He has been practising as a barrister and solicitor in Hobart for some twenty seven years, both in private practice and for the government. Since October 2000 he has been employed as a corporate solicitor with the Hydro-Electric Corporation. For ten years he was a director of the Tasmanian Cerebral Palsy Association and is presently a Director and Company Secretary of The Military Heritage Foundation of Tasmania (the company managing the historic Military Museum of Tasmania).

Richard Stone FAIBF
AICD ANACD (USA)
Chairman VIC Division
(to Nov 07)

Mr Stone is also KPMG Associate Director – Board Advisory Services (PT); Board Member Centacare Catholic Family Services (Melbourne); Chairman Friends of Mary of the Cross Drug Agency; Member of St Vincent’s Hospital Melbourne Ethics Committee and Past President of the Rotary Club of Central Melbourne – Sunrise. Richard has been with KPMG since 1994 and before that Westpac for 35 years, where his last appointment was Chief Manager, Melbourne.

John Hood
Chairman, VIC Division
(from Nov 07)

John Hood holds a Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering from Melbourne University. He has spent most of his working career as a management consultant having joined PA Management Consultants in 1969. In 1987 he joined Amrop International, a leading International Executive Search consultancy and has spent the last 20 years in this profession. John is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, a Fellow of the Institute of Management Consultants and a Fellow of the Institution of Engineers. He joined the Board of the Red Cross Victorian Division in 1995, was elected Deputy Chairman in 2006 and became Chairman in 2007. John is also involved in the Aged Care industry and is Deputy Chairman of MECWA, a leading provider of aged care services in the South East of Melbourne.

Ian Anson CPA, AAIB
Chairman WA Division
(from Nov 04)

Mr Anson has been a practicing accountant and business consultant for over 30 years. Mr Anson became Chair of WA Division and a member of the Australian Red Cross Board in November 2004 after serving as an office bearer and on Divisional Committees since joining in 1998.
The Honourable Dr David Hamill served on the Queensland Divisional Board of the Australian Red Cross Society from 2003 to 2007. A member of the Australian Red Cross Blood Service Board since 2004, he was appointed Chairman in April 2007.

David Hamill is a professional company director and serves as either Chairman or Director on the boards of several companies including the ASX-listed Babcock & Brown Infrastructure Limited. An Adjunct Professor at the University of Queensland, he is a Fellow of both the Australia Institute of Company Directors and the Chartered Institute of Transport. David served six terms in the Queensland Parliament as the Member for Ipswich from 1983 to 2001, and was a Minister in both the Goss and Beattie governments. His Ministerial appointments included Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development from 1989 to 1995: Minister for Education from 1995 to 1996; and Treasurer of Queensland from 1998 to 2001, David received a Centenary Medal in 2001 for ‘distinguished service to the community and the public sector’.

Jill Lester

Appointed Board Member
(to Feb 08)

Jill Lester is a communications professional, specialising in reputation and crisis management, and strategic communications advice. Her previous roles include a decade as Executive General Manager, Communications of the Commonwealth Bank, where she was responsible for providing advice to the CEO and Leadership Team on reputation management, public relations, community relations and internal communications to the Bank’s 35,000 staff. She has also had extensive experience in the Australian Public Service, most recently with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. She sits on a number of boards, including the US based International Issues Management Council and the Advisory Board of the Australian Centre for Public Communication, University of Technology, Sydney. Jill has Bachelor degrees in Arts and Economics, post graduate qualifications in Education and Librarianship and a Masters Degree in Economics.

Kate Carnell AO

Appointed Board Member
(from July 06)

Best known for her successful term as Chief Minister of the ACT from 1995 – 2000, Ms Carnell held the Treasury, Health and Community Care, Information Technology and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs portfolios among others. Currently the CEO of Australian Food and Grocery Council (AFGC), a Patron of UNIFEM among other organisations and chair of CRC Forestry Ltd. Ms Carnell is a director of the Improvement Foundation Australia and serves on the National Prevention Taskforce. Ms Carnell has been Chair of Red Cross ‘Caring Across Canberra Appeal’ for the past three years.

Professor Lowitja O’Donoghue

Appointed Board Member
(from April 08)

Professor Lowitja O’Donoghue AM CBE was born in 1932 at Indulkana in South Australia of Pitjantjatjara and Irish descent. She was the first and only Aboriginal Australian to address the UN General Assembly, for seven years the most senior Aboriginal person in public office and a delegate to Australia’s 1998 Constitutional Republic Convention. In 1990 she was appointed as inaugural chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), advising government on policy and overseeing a budget of a billion dollars a year. Professor O’Donoghue has received many accolades. As well as being Australian of the Year in 1984, she was named a National Living Treasure in 1998, won the Advance Australia award in 1982, was appointed a member of the Order of Australia in 1977, a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in 1983, and a Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) in 1999. She was made an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Australian College of Physicians and the Royal College of Nursing. She also holds an Honorary Doctorate of Law from the Australian National and Notre Dame Universities, and is a Doctor of Flinders University, the ANU, the University of South Australia and Queensland University of Technology (QUT). She has been a Professorial Fellow at Flinders University since 2000.
**Meeting Attendance**

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<th>Board Member</th>
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A Meetings held during the period of office of the Board Member

B Meetings attended by the Board Member

C Meetings attended by an alternate of the Board Member

All members of the Board are independent of Management.
The Selection and Role of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and the Chairman of the Audit & Risk Management Committee

The Council of the Society elects the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and the Chairman of the Audit & Risk Management Committee at the Annual General Meeting.

The Chairman’s role includes:

- Chairing Australian Red Cross Council and Board Meetings
- Providing leadership to Australian Red Cross, especially to the Board and the Society
- Ensuring that the Board fulfils its role and responsibilities
- Ensuring the efficient conduct of business at Council meetings
- Ensuring open and constructive discussion of all issues at Council and Board meetings
- Guiding members of the Board to observe their fiduciary and other duties
- Actively participating, working with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), in relations with the ICRC, Federation and Australian Government
- Maintaining an effective working relationship with the CEO and taking the lead in monitoring the CEO’s performance
- Acting as a spokesperson for the Society in liaison with the CEO
- Ensuring effective administration of Board processes in conjunction with the Secretary
- Communicating and consulting with stakeholders including community leaders
- Ensuring that the Board undertakes periodic reviews of its own performance.
Changes to the Board

Australian Red Cross lost 4 experienced Board members this year.

Richard Dunn has made a great contribution both to the New South Wales Division and to the Board. In recognition of this, he was given Honorary Life Membership in 2007. His distinguished career in public auditing has underpinned his contribution as Chairman of the National Asset Strategy Committee.

Jill Lester has made a significant impact as one of the first two members appointed to the Board by Council. The ‘appointed members’ have added independent perspectives to the Board. Jill has chaired the International Committee, drawing on her extensive international experience. She has left Australia to take up a position as CEO of an aid organisation based in New York.

John Reeves has been a mainstay of the Northern Territory Division for many years, and has been an influential member of the Board. He served as Chairman of the nominations and Remuneration Committee, and left the Board when he was appointed as a judge of the Federal Court.

Richard Stone has been one of the pioneers in the reforms to the governance of Red Cross over the past five years. He has consistently taken the lead in introducing changes that are based on best practice, drawing on his expertise as head of governance consulting for KPMG.

Katherine Ngo also relinquished her position as Youth Representative in order to take up a medical placement in London. Katherine made valuable contributions to our deliberations in her time on the Board.

Developments during the year

During the Year, the Board approved a major review of the Royal Charter and Rules (our equivalent of a Constitution). We engaged a firm of governance consultants (Cameron Ralph) to provide expert guidance in undertaking this review.

The overall goal of the review is: To ensure that the Australian Red Cross Charter and Rules form a modern and effective framework that:

- is relevant to members and volunteers; and
- supports the ongoing achievement of the organisation’s vision – to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilising the power of humanity.

A wide range of stakeholders will be consulted, and a proposed new Charter and Rules will be presented for endorsement to the 2009 AGM of the Society.

Australian Red Cross member independence

All members of the Board are independent of Management.
Audit, internal control, risk management and reporting

Audit governance principles

Audit governance principles – the Board is committed to preparing financial reports that represent a true and fair view, complying with all applicable and relevant accounting standards and also ensuring the external auditor is independent and services the interests of Australian Red Cross. Australian Accounting Standards are monitored and practices reviewed accordingly.

The Board maintains a high standard of internal control in all aspects of its operations. Internal control comprises all policies, systems and procedures established by the Board and Management to safeguard assets and ensure the accuracy and reliability of records, provide operational efficiency and encourage adherence to the Society’s policies. To oversee these controls, the Board has established two Committees – the Audit & Risk Management and National Asset Strategy Committees, which provide independent appraisal to measure and evaluate the effectiveness of internal controls being applied throughout Australian Red Cross.

The Board appoints an internal auditor to undertake a program of internal auditing.

At its February 2008 Meeting, the Board approved an organisation-wide common Risk Management Framework to AS/NZ Standard 4360:2004, together with an associated Policy, Implementation Plan and Communications Plan. Implementation commenced immediately, under the oversight of the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

The Australian Red Cross Board receives regular reports about the financial condition, operational results, compliance and risk factors. The CEO and Chief Financial Officer (CFO) provide regular statements of financial performance and the formal financial statements attest that the financial statements present a true and fair view of the financial condition and operational results of Australian Red Cross.

Avoidance of conflicts of interest by an Australian Red Cross Board Member

The Board is conscious of its obligations to ensure that Board Members avoid conflicts of interest (both actual and apparent) between their duty to the Society and their own interests.

During the course of the year, the Board adopted a Conflict of Interest Policy, which provides that if there is an actual or potential conflict of interest, that member must formally declare the conflict and abstain from voting on the matter giving rise to the conflict. The disclosure is to be recorded in the minutes and the Board shall decide whether the member shall remain in the meeting or not while the subject of the disclosure is considered. A register of conflicts is maintained.

The Board also adopted a Code of Conduct. Each Member of the Board is required to sign the Code indicating their commitment to observe a number of behavioural requirements that are consistent with good governance.

Meetings of the Australian Red Cross Board and their conduct

The Board has up to 11 scheduled meetings each year. It also meets whenever necessary to deal with specific matters between the scheduled meetings, usually by way of teleconference.

The Office Bearers in consultation with the CEO meet throughout the year to ensure comprehensive consideration by the Board of Australian Red Cross to operations, financial reporting and the organisation’s strategic direction and major risks. The Board Members, who are consulted about the meeting agenda, receive the meeting materials seven days in advance. Board Members are always encouraged to participate in a robust exchange of views and to bring their judgments to bear on the issues and decisions at hand.

The CEO, CFO, Director of Services and International Operations (‘Chief Operating Officer’ in 2007 – 8) and National Director, Marketing, Fundraising and Communications attend all Board meetings and other senior members of the management team are regularly invited to attend Board meetings for items of interest and those of its committees to deliver presentations. They are able to be contacted by Board Members between meetings to discuss issues or seek advice or further information. The Board regularly meets for a period without Management or the Board Secretary immediately before each meeting. The Audit & Risk Management Committee, the Governance Committee and the Nominations and Remuneration Committee may meet without Management as they require, including meeting with the auditors or consultants.
The role and responsibilities of the Board include:

- Ensuring the good governance of the organisation, including:
  - complying with all applicable Federation guidelines
  - ensuring a comprehensive suite of delegations, policies and procedures is in place
  - Fostering international relations, and ensuring that Australian Red Cross acts in accordance with the spirit and principles of the Geneva Conventions, ICRC Regulations, the International Movement’s Protocols, and the Fundamental Principles
  - Observing fiduciary duties arising from the Royal Charter, Corporations Law, the common law, and relevant legislation
  - Ensuring that Australian Red Cross has a common identity and purpose
  - Ensuring the organisation’s financial viability, solvency and sustainability
  - Determining the optimal use of all assets and resources, subject to a thorough evaluation process and the achievement of a wide geographical spread of activities
  - Ensuring the effective management of risk
  - Preserving and promoting the reputation of Australian Red Cross
  - Ensuring a satisfactory framework is in place to bring about compliance with applicable legislation, regulation, policies and procedures

- Monitoring the performance of the Chief Executive Officer and Board Secretary specifically, and Management generally
- Monitoring performance against agreed strategic plans and budgets
- Ensuring the Board has a reasonably skilled, effective and diverse membership profile (to the extent possible), and appropriate operating policies and procedures
- Periodically evaluating its own performance in order to improve
- Ensuring optimal succession planning is in place for the Board and senior management, and approving remuneration for senior management, taking into consideration advice provided by the Nominations and Remuneration Committee
- Developing and maintaining ethical standards based on the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement
- Establishing and implementing a recognition process to acknowledge the efforts of members, volunteers and staff.

These roles and responsibilities of the Board are taken from the Board’s Governance Manual.

The Manual also describes those matters that are reserved for decision directly by the Board and its Committees, and those the Board has delegated to its Blood Service and Management. Comprehensive sets of delegations are in place, and are periodically reviewed and updated.
Commitees

The Australian Red Cross Board has an established comprehensive framework of committees to support Australian Red Cross in policy formulation, governance and accountability:

- Audit and Risk Management Committee
- Governance Committee
- International Committee
- National Asset Strategy Committee
- National Awards Committee
- National Emergency Services Advisory Committee
- National Tracing, Refugee & Asylum Seeker Advisory Committee
- National Youth Advisory Committee
- Nominations and Remunerations Committee

Committee procedures

The Committees develop an annual meeting plan but also meet on other occasions as necessary. Each Committee is entitled to the resources and information it requires to carry out its responsibilities, including direct access to the CEO, senior management, and access to professional advice subject to prior approval from the Chairman and CEO as applicable.

A copy of the minutes and/or reports from all Committee meetings form part of the papers for the next practicable meeting of the Board and usually the Chairman of the Committee will present the Report. Each Committee must review its own performance annually.

Board Secretary

Dr Michael Tomlinson ACIS

The Board Secretary is responsible for:

- developing and maintaining governance systems
- advising the Board on the interpretation of the Charter and Rules, governance principles and on compliance with regulatory requirements.
- undertaking the management of the organisation’s corporate secretarial functions
- together with the CEO, carrying out the instructions of the Board, assisting in the implementation of strategies and giving practical effect to the Board’s decisions.
Red Cross Blood Service is subject to the authority of the Australian Red Cross Board set out in the Charter and Rules. An Advisory Committee has been established for the purpose of advising the Blood Service Board on a range of technical and safety issues concerning the Blood Service, and the Committee can also draw issues to the attention of the Australian Red Cross Board where necessary. The Australian Red Cross Board appoints all members of the Blood Service Board (with the exception of the Blood Service CEO) and the Advisory Committee and determines the remuneration of members of the Blood Service Board. The Australian Red Cross Blood Service Board appoints the CEO of the Blood Service on terms and conditions it determines.

The governance framework of the Blood Service is described in greater detail in its separate Annual Report.

Other members of the National Management Team include senior national office managers and the Executive Directors of the Divisions.