



Australian Red Cross
THE POWER OF HUMANITY



Protect this
emblem because
it **protects lives**

CRISIS CARE COMMITMENT

Common **misuses**

Some common forms of misuse in Australia are:

- first aid kits and medical products
- signs on vets' and doctors' surgeries or pharmacies
- media, advertising and healthcare products
- repair services, maps and street directories
- children's toys.

A misuse can either be a straight reproduction of the emblem or a design that incorporates or stylises the red cross. This includes any use of a symbol so closely resembling a red cross that it could be mistaken for one and also protects a white cross on a red background.

Before



After



'After we found that our new Data Doctor logo inadvertently breached the law, Red Cross helped us find suitable alternatives.'

Peter Michael, CEO,
Michaels Camera,
www.michaels.com.au



'I mistakenly thought the red cross was a symbol of medical care, but now thanks to Red Cross I understand its true meaning.'

Jodi Paterson,
Sweet Lilly Designs,
www.sweetlilly.com.au

Why protect the emblem?

**By signing
the Geneva
Conventions,
all countries of
the world have
agreed to respect
and protect the
emblem of the red
cross on a white
background.**

In armed conflict the red cross says 'don't shoot!' – this person, site, vehicle or equipment is not part of the fight, but is providing impartial assistance.

For 150 years the emblem has saved lives, particularly those of the wounded, prisoners-of-war and civilians in wartime. It enables the Red Cross organisation to access victims of war and carry out its life-saving work.

The emblem means medical assistance only in armed conflict and, even then, only in special circumstances when used by authorised people, such as military medical services.

For these reasons the red cross emblem is set apart from other symbols and emblems. Its use is defined by international law and Australian law.

More than a logo

In Australia, the use of the red cross emblem without the written permission of the Minister for Defence is a breach of the law.

The red cross emblem is far more than a logo or trademark. Rather, as the universal emblem of protection in armed conflict, its use is restricted under international humanitarian law and specifically by Australian law – Section 15 of the *Geneva Conventions Act 1957* (Cth).

Even Australian Red Cross has strict obligations about how it uses the red cross emblem to promote its activities and products.

Be aware of the law. Businesses, retailers and designers may be prosecuted and fined for using the red cross wrongly.

The authority of the emblem must be maintained and its meaning widely understood in peacetime – in order to be effective when lives are under threat in war.

Help us ensure the integrity of the emblem. Act responsibly and within the law. Refrain from misusing the red cross and honour its unique protective meaning.

Need alternatives?

Any of these alternatives are appropriate:



A white cross on a green background is used to indicate first aid and workplace/occupational health and safety.



A white 'H' on a blue background is commonly used on road signs to indicate a public hospital.



A white cross on a blue background is otherwise often used on road signs to indicate a public hospital.



Some nations have chosen to adopt a **red crescent** or a **red crystal** rather than a red cross as alternatives for protection in armed conflict. The emblems are restricted under international and Australian law, in the same way as the red cross.

For more information on the red crescent and red crystal see the **'Emblems of humanity'** brochure available at:

www.icrc.org

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www.redcross.org.au