

# Acts for humanity keep us together

Australian Red Cross 2021 Year in Review

Australian Red Cross/Aysha Leo



A good yarn keeps Auntie Carol connected, and now the Kamilaroi Elder is sharing her wisdom with a new generation of young women

# The call to act for humanity

Red Cross people represent Australia's heart and soul. A 27,000-strong humanitarian network of dedicated staff, members and volunteers of all generations, a kaleidoscope of backgrounds, expertise across regional and rural country to the inner urban cities. While nothing is ever simple, at its core – we are people determined to help all people across every edge and corner of this vast country.

This call to act for humanity is born from our roots in 1914 at the outbreak of the First World War to provide humanitarian assistance to the wounded and vulnerable – and to help all people find safety no matter which side they were on. This foundation of the Red Cross and our role as part of a global Movement, remains true to who we are today, and it will tomorrow. Because we need each other. We need each other to find our kindness, to unearth empathy, to stand resilient together against all odds.

Red Cross are often first to the scene of a disaster or emergency, and we work behind the scenes, as advocates or humanitarian diplomats, providing facts and evidence that support decision makers and opinion leaders to act for humanity and in the interests of people facing vulnerability. We are the frontline and the heartline.

We were activated to respond to multiple natural disasters across the country this year, including the continuing support for those impacted by the Summer Bushfires 2019/20.

This year, we've supported people in multiple emergency events responded to across Australia, including people impacted by New South Wales' one-in-100-year floods, the Victorian storm damage that left communities under water and people without power for weeks, and those affected by the Perth Hills and Adelaide Hills fires, and Western Australia's (WA) Cyclone Seroja. It's been a year where we have been 'always on'.

In the same year, Red Cross has been a constant source of emergency relief to people in isolation in lockdowns across the country during the COVID-19 pandemic. We've been there for a vast spectrum of humanitarian needs during this pandemic – from sending wellbeing kits to people in hotel quarantine, to checking on the welfare of people in isolation, with Psychological First Aid phone calls through the COVID-19 TeleOutreach program. We were there for people on temporary visas or without visas who didn't have access to a sustainable safety net during COVID-19 (such as Centrelink or Medicare) by providing emergency relief payments and food relief to people and casework support across every part of Australia.

This year, our work has continued for migrants in transition, people in the justice system, our place-based work alongside

Australian Red Cross/Michael T K Chong



Abdi is a migration support case worker in Perth. The Emergency Relief program helps migrants and asylum seekers with basic needs, such as emergency cash grants, rent assistance, food vouchers and transport vouchers. The service has been ramped up during the COVID-19 pandemic.

First Nations communities, and in the Asia Pacific. We've worked with our partners across non-profit and profit sectors to deliver products and services to help people in times of need. Our innovations put humanity first. We've been called upon by governments for our expertise to respond to local and national humanitarian priorities. Our psychosocial and financial support continues today to help individuals and communities survive the uncertainty of changes beyond their control.

## The COVID-19 pandemic

- **70,042** people in Australia through mandatory isolation due to COVID-19 with 118,516 Psychological First Aid phone calls through the COVID-19 TeleOutreach program, and 33,000 wellbeing kits.
- **522,984** people reached with COVID-19 resilience information. This includes 26,082 views of COVID-19 public information webpages; and 496,902 people reached through COVID-19 public information social media posts.
- **128,133** people on temporary visas or without visas who didn't have access to a sustainable safety net during COVID-19 (such as Centrelink or Medicare) were directly supported over the year, by providing 97,793 emergency relief payments totaling \$51.7M – through generous support from donors, plus Federal and several State and Territory governments – as well as food relief to 44,422 people and casework support across every part of Australia.
- **554,026** people accessed referral information and additional support for people on temporary visas/no visas who were not eligible for mainstream government supports during COVID-19.





Mount Dandenong resident Jim Henderson has a welfare check by Australian Red Cross representative Kerry Macfarlane and Corporal Paul Summerbell following the recent storm in the region

## Emergencies & Disasters

- **17,930** calls received through the Community Activation and Social Initiative program (CASI) in Victoria.
- **4,713** individuals impacted by Australia's 2019–20 bushfires with **\$82.3M** cash paid in 8,687 bushfire response grants in FY21. As at 30 June 2021, \$224.8M, out of a total of \$241.6M raised, had been disbursed or spent, see more in our [Bushfire Reports](#).
- **151,510** people in **43** emergency events responded to across Australia.
- **2,429** people in NSW communities following record-breaking rain and severe flooding in March 2021, and \$2.8M raised through our NSW Floods Appeal.
- **292,426** people in Australia equipped to be prepared for and recover from disasters.
- **38,588** people received First Aid training and **2,884** people received Mental Health First Aid training.



Australian Red Cross/Susan Cullinan

## Displacement by war, conflict, migration

- **141** cases of missing people were successfully concluded, with the whereabouts or fate of loved ones being determined, out of a total of **974** cases that were worked on, relating to a total of **2,255** people.
- **1,639** refugees and humanitarian entrants were supported to settle in Australia, **45%** of whom were children and young people.
- **20,127** people were involved in Red Cross sessions building and strengthening welcoming communities for newly arrived refugees, people seeking asylum and migrants across Australia, including the schools-based program In Search of Safety.
- In total we spent **665** working hours or **95** days spent monitoring the conditions of immigration detention facilities (largely remotely), during the pandemic.
- **181** people from **37** countries impacted by modern slavery received holistic casework, providing suitable accommodation, health care, emotional support, employment, financial support, education and training, essential items, connection to community, access to social services and referrals to legal and migration advice.



Hayfa is a Yazidi woman from the Singjar District of northern Iraq. In 2014 the world watched in horror as Yazidi communities were surrounded and attacked, with reports of mass murder, trafficking of women and children enlisted in the militia. Hayfa moved to the regional Queensland town of Toowoomba in 2018 under a humanitarian visa and has since built a life for herself and her two sons. She works with Red Cross tracing workers to find out what happened to her husband, Ghazi. They were separated by fighters separated in their village.





Volunteer Elders meet with inmates through the Sisters for Change program at Townsville Correctional Centre.

## Lived experience in and beyond the justice system:

- **1,000** people in contact with the justice system are breaking cycles of contact with the system and transitioning to positive, productive lives.
- **144** individuals in prison volunteering as part of the Community Based Health and First Aid (CBHFA) across the country.

## Our older Australians with:

- **98,994** nutritious [meals](#) supporting care and independence.
- **41,067** community [transport](#) trips to connect older Australians with their local community.
- **181,710** hours of social support for people experiencing loneliness, ranging from daily Telecross calls to check on their wellbeing daily, TeleYarn to [connect Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples](#), [social outings](#), [home visits](#), [social outings](#), [group activities](#).
- **8,590** visits to residential aged care or independently in the community through the Community Visitors Scheme.



TeleYarn volunteer Aunty Stella contacts Aunty Carol daily to check her wellbeing. They have formed a genuine friendship where they learn and grow with each other.

View our full Annual Report on our website  
and see how acts for humanity keep us together  
[redcross.org.au/annualreport2021](https://redcross.org.au/annualreport2021)

