



# The Australian Civilian Corps

Supporting stabilisation and recovery from disaster  
and conflict

January 2010

# Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>What is the Australian Civilian Corps?</b>	<b>5</b>
Background to the Australian Civilian Corps	6
<b>Why Australia needs a civilian corps</b>	<b>8</b>
Australia: A good international citizen	8
Promoting stability and prosperity in our region	9
International deployable civilian capabilities	9
<b>The Australian Civilian Corps register</b>	<b>11</b>
The register	11
Selection process	11
Expertise on the register	11
Training	12
<b>Planning for and deploying personnel</b>	<b>15</b>
Types of deployments	15
Duration of deployments	15
Deployment planning	16
Deployed personnel	16
<b>Governance arrangements</b>	<b>19</b>
Office of the Australian Civilian Corps	19
Moving forward	20
Contact us	20
Definitions	21

# Executive Summary

The Australian Civilian Corps represents a significant new step in how Australia responds to natural disasters and conflicts overseas.

The Australian Civilian Corps will enable the rapid deployment of civilian specialists to countries affected by natural disaster or conflict. These civilian specialists will contribute to Australia's efforts to assist stabilisation and recovery in affected countries with the urgency required in these terrible situations.

The Australian Civilian Corps builds on Australia's history of providing technical assistance in times of crisis, such as that provided in Solomon Islands and East Timor. It will complement Australia's humanitarian responses and bilateral development efforts.

The Australian Civilian Corps will make a lasting contribution to countries affected by natural disaster or conflict, working with and within partner governments to resuscitate markets, livelihoods and services, accelerating progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

The Australian Civilian Corps will comprise a register of up to 500 civilian specialists.

Specialists will be chosen for their skills in areas such as public administration and finance, law and justice, engineering, health administration and community development. Specialists will also be selected for their ability to work in challenging overseas environments.

Personnel will be sought from all levels of government and the broader Australian community and will remain in their regular employment until accepting a deployment.

Deployments will be managed by the Office of the Australian Civilian Corps, located in the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) in Canberra, in cooperation with other Australian government agencies.

The Australian Civilian Corps is expected to be fully operational by 2011.



Credit: Melbourne the Photographer

**'What does the Australian Civilian Corps mean in practice? It means the Government being able to deploy rapidly civilians with expert knowledge and abilities to disaster-struck regions or conflict zones with the urgency required in these often terrible and traumatic circumstances.'**

**- Prime Minister Kevin Rudd at the launch of the Australian Civilian Corps, 25 October 2009**

# What is the Australian Civilian Corps?

The Australian Civilian Corps is an initiative that will rapidly deploy civilian specialists to countries affected by natural disaster or conflict. These civilian specialists will contribute to Australia's efforts to assist stabilisation and recovery in affected countries with the urgency required in these terrible situations.

The Australian Civilian Corps will comprise a register of up to 500 civilian specialists, ready to respond to requests for assistance from affected countries.

Civilian specialists will be selected for their technical skills and ability to work in challenging overseas environments.

Australian Civilian Corps specialists will come from a broad range of fields with a breadth of skills and experience.

Specialists will be sought primarily from the following six fields of expertise:

- Security, justice and reconciliation
- Machinery of government
- Essential service restoration
- Economic stability
- Community and social capacity building
- Stabilisation and recovery management

Australian Civilian Corps specialists will be drawn from federal, state, territory and local government and the broader Australian community. They will remain in their regular employment until offered a deployment. Deployed specialist will be paid a salary, commensurate with the environment they are deployed into.

Deployed civilian specialists may work in-line with host government officials to provide essential services or work as advisers to assist bilateral or multilateral recovery efforts.

**The goal of the Australian Civilian Corps is to enable the Australian Government to rapidly deploy civilian specialists to contribute to stabilisation and recovery efforts in natural disaster or conflict affected countries.**



As the situation progresses and the focus shifts to state-building and reconstruction, work may include institutional capacity building, mentoring host state officials and assisting institutional reforms. The duration of deployments will depend on the complexity and severity of the crisis.

The Office of the Australian Civilian Corps within AusAID will recruit and train civilian specialists and manage deployments in cooperation with other government agencies.

## Examples of potential Australian Civilian Corps assignments

The following are examples of how the Australian Civilian Corps could respond to requests for assistance.

- On request from the United Nations, the Australian Civilian Corps quickly deploys a senior government official with expertise in federal systems of budget administration to assist a post-conflict country with budget control. The civilian specialist is supported by the UN and trained by the Australian Civilian Corps, in how to work within the UN system, to build capacity and effectively translate their skills to the local context.
- On request of a country recovering from the impacts of natural disaster, the Australian Civilian Corps deploys a water and sanitation planner to assist local government officials rebuild water infrastructure.
- The United Nations is providing international support to elections in a country recovering from conflict. The Australian Civilian Corps provides a group of appropriately skilled public servants to act as election observers in the run-up to, during, and following the elections.

## Background to the Australian Civilian Corps

The concept of a deployable Australian civilian capability emerged from the Australian Government's 2020 Summit in April 2008. The Government responded to the idea of a 'deployable public service' by agreeing to develop a policy framework to enable the rapid deployment of civilian experts to assist in international disaster assistance, stabilisation and post conflict recovery efforts.

The policy framework was approved by Government and announced by the Prime Minister at the East Asia Summit in Thailand on 25 October 2009. The announcement was set against the backdrop of multiple disasters in Samoa and Tonga, Indonesia, Vietnam and the Philippines in the weeks leading up to the Summit and the ongoing challenges and insecurity in Afghanistan, highlighting that countries affected by natural disaster and conflict require significant assistance to alleviate human suffering and to begin the process of recovery.

The Australian Civilian Corps will lay the foundations for recovery and future prosperity in countries affected by natural disaster and conflict, advancing our reputation and our influence in the international community.



Credit: Bart Verwey

**'It's the longer term rebuilding of communities, rebuilding of infrastructure, rebuilding of societies that this complementary effort is aimed at.'**

**- Minister for Foreign Affairs, Stephen Smith, 22 April 2009**

# Why Australia needs a civilian corps

## Australia: A good international citizen

Conflict, insecurity and humanitarian crises can undermine hard-won development gains and future growth prospects. More needs to be done in the aftermath of natural disaster and conflict to assist recovery, reconstruction and development. Military interventions and humanitarian assistance alone can not deliver durable security or development gains.

When countries experience natural disaster or conflict, the capacity of governments to provide security and basic services for their citizens is often limited, stunting economic growth and exacerbating poverty. A country that cannot control finances, create jobs and deliver basic services, also struggles to build support from its citizens.

The United Nations Secretary-General's 2009 report on peacebuilding calls for an earlier and more coherent response from the wider international community to address the challenges that arise and persist following conflict:

'time and time again, we have failed to catalyse a response that delivers immediate, tangible results on the ground. Often it has taken many months before essential government functions resume or basic services are available.'<sup>1</sup>

Public administration, agricultural recovery and security sector reform need to be prioritised to support basic service delivery, livelihoods and lasting peace.

A clear role has emerged for rapid and targeted deployments of civilian specialists to deliver technical assistance to central or regional governments. Civilians are needed to work with and within partner governments to resuscitate markets, livelihoods and services and build the state's capacity to manage political, security and development processes.

The Australian Civilian Corps will deliver civilian technical assistance quickly—alongside security operations where necessary—greatly increasing response time and improving the prospects for stabilising and rebuilding the essential functions of government in affected countries.

---

<sup>1</sup> UN 2009. 'Report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict', 11 June 2009 p.3



## Promoting stability and prosperity in our region

The Prime Minister's 2008 inaugural *National Security Statement* recognises the relationship between development and security and commits Australia to respond in times of conflict.

'Intrastate conflict in our region and beyond will continue to flare... the humanitarian implications for people affected in these conflicts are also of concern to Australia's national security and foreign policy interests. We expect to make practical contributions in times of crisis, commensurate with our role in the international community.'<sup>2</sup>

The risk of fragile states disrupting stability and prosperity in our region is an ongoing challenge for the Australian Government and to countries' achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Providing early technical assistance to states affected by conflict or natural disaster, through the Australian Civilian Corps, will help Australia meet this challenge. Promoting an international environment, particularly in the Asia Pacific region that is stable, peaceful and prosperous, is in Australia's national interest.

## International deployable civilian capabilities

Australia joins other members of the international community, including the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, and the United States in establishing a capability for deploying civilian specialists.

Deployable civilian capabilities have been used to good effect in a range of post crisis situations around the world, including in Rwanda, Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Bosnia, Iraq, Haiti, Chad, East Timor and Solomon Islands.

The Australian Civilian Corps will engage with international partners with deployable civilian capabilities to improve cooperation and coordination of multilateral or coalition civilian deployments. The Australian Civilian Corps will form strategic partnerships with key international partners. Enhanced coordination will deliver better and immediate outcomes on the ground, ensure interoperability and help spread the political and resource burden between like-minded states.

---

<sup>2</sup> Rudd, Kevin 2008. 'The First National Security Statement to the Parliament', address by the Prime Minister to the Parliament, 4 December 2008



Credit: Kate Holt

'When large scale violence ends, the challenge facing the leadership and people of the country are enormous. The situation is fluid, the peace is often very fragile and the needs of the people are far greater than the capacity to meet them. The threats to peace are often greatest during this early phase, but so too are the opportunities to set virtuous cycles in motion from the start.'

- UN Secretary's Report on Peacebuilding, 2008

# The Australian Civilian Corps register

## The register

The Civilian Corps will comprise a register of up to 500 civilian specialists. These specialists will remain in their regular employment until offered a deployment. Australian Civilian Corps personnel will be sought from all levels of government and the broader Australian community.

Specialists will be chosen for their skills in areas such as public administration and finance, law and justice, infrastructure, health administration and community development (see Box 1), as well as their ability to work in challenging overseas environments.

The Office of the Australian Civilian Corps will build the register over four years. The mix of expertise on the register will be based on emerging demand. It will be regularly evaluated and updated to reflect current and future needs.

## Selection process

A rigorous recruitment process will underpin the selection of high calibre and experienced individuals for the Australian Civilian Corps register. Selection will be based on technical knowledge, qualifications and demonstrated experience in relevant areas.

Specialists will require personal attributes appropriate for deployment into difficult environments such as cross-cultural sensitivity, flexibility, self-reliance and resilience.

They will be required to undergo medical, psychosocial and security checks.

## Expertise on the register

Civilian specialists will have a broad range of skills and expertise. Box 1 provides an overview of the range of expertise that will be targeted for the Australian Civilian Corps register.

**Box 1: Examples of key areas of expertise required for the Australian Civilian Corps**

Security, justice and reconciliation	Legal and judicial Corrections Human rights
Machinery of government	Public sector management Revenue and expenditure Public sector human resource management and development Customs, immigration and border security Electoral and parliamentary processes Provincial and local government administration Procurement and logistics Regulation reform
Essential services	Health administration Education administration Transport Utilities administration and engineering Public works and infrastructure
Economic stability	Private sector development Economic development Employment and livelihoods Local markets and microfinance
Community and social capacity building	Reintegration and rehabilitation planning Community development planning and implementation Civil society strengthening
Stabilisation and recovery management	Program design and management Protection/ security Civil-military engagement Stabilisation and recovery United Nations and non-government organisation engagement Logistics and communications

## Training

Comprehensive training will be provided to all Australian Civilian Corps personnel prior to deployment. Training will ensure that civilian specialists can perform effectively in challenging overseas environments and can integrate well with other deployed Australian Government personnel, host countries, and multilateral organisations.

Australian Civilian Corps personnel will participate in a range of training programs. Core induction training will be undertaken after personnel join the register.



Prior to any deployment, training specific to an individual's particular assignment will be provided. Ongoing training will also be available.

Delivery of training may include online components as well as face-to-face training and self-directed learning. The total training commitment of personnel will vary and be dependent on a number of factors including individual training requirements and location of deployment.

### **Induction training**

As personnel recruited to the register will already have strong technical skills, core induction training will focus on developing the competencies specific to deploying overseas with the Australian Civilian Corps. These competencies include:

- Understanding of the Australian Civilian Corps objectives and processes
- Understanding of stabilisation and recovery practice
- Gender and cross cultural awareness
- First aid
- Defensive driving
- Safety and security awareness
- Mentoring and capacity building in cross cultural environments
- Teamwork and leadership skills
- Civil military coordination
- Representing the Australian Government
- Legal environment

### **Assignment specific training**

Immediately prior to deployment, further training and briefings specific to an individual's assignment will be provided. This will include situational and cultural awareness briefings, as well as any necessary health and psychological preparation.

### **Ongoing training**

Ongoing training will be available to register personnel to maintain the currency of their skills. The main form of delivery is likely to be e-learning, for example further analysis of capacity development issues. Some register personnel will be invited to participate in civil-military exercises.



Credit: Australian Defence Force

‘Australians are motivated to extraordinary levels of generosity in times of both domestic crisis and when disaster strikes overseas and others face ongoing suffering. Australia’s standing as a good international citizen, working regionally and internationally, is critical to promoting and advancing Australia’s foreign policy and national interests.’

- Policy statement on Australia’s international development assistance, 2009

# Planning for and deploying personnel

## Types of deployments

Australian Civilian Corps will support a range of situations and deployment types. It will be able to support assistance missions led by Australia, those in which Australia plays a major role as part of a coalition effort, or where Australia can make a niche contribution in support of multilateral or bilateral efforts.

Australian Civilian Corps personnel may be deployed alongside Australian military and police, where present, or in a stand-alone capacity.

The Australian Civilian Corps may also provide civilians to United Nations peacekeeping missions, moving beyond Australia's existing contribution of police and troops. This will position Australia as a strong contributor to the civilian elements of United Nations missions.

In contributing to United Nations or multilateral missions, the Australian Civilian Corps may work with foreign military, peacekeepers, police or other civilian specialists and programs.

Australian Civilian Corps assistance could include services recovery, institutional capacity building, mentoring of host government officials and assistance with institutional reforms. This could include personnel working in-line to provide essential services, working with local authorities to deliver the immediate terms of peace agreements or working as stabilisation advisers to bilateral or multilateral forces.

The Australian Civilian Corps will also be capable of providing state building and recovery assistance as circumstances stabilise and the focus shifts to recovery and reconstruction—recognising that the consequences of disaster and conflict can be felt for many years.

## Duration of deployments

The duration of an Australian Civilian Corps engagement in any country will be determined by the nature of the crisis and the needs of the affected country. It will depend on a range of factors such as the complexity and severity of the crisis.

To support recovery, deployments would start as early as possible after a crisis to ensure no gap exists between humanitarian and long term development assistance.

## Deployment planning

Effective planning will underpin the Australian Civilian Corps' ability to deploy civilian specialists rapidly.

The Office of the Australian Civilian Corps planning team is responsible for both contingency planning and for rapid planning in response to a natural disaster or conflict.

Contingency planning in coordination with other Australian Government agencies will ensure the Government has the ability to respond to the needs of affected countries quickly, by preparing plans in advance.

In the event of a natural disaster or in a post-conflict environment, and after the Australian Government decides to respond to a request for assistance using the Australian Civilian Corps, the Office will coordinate assessment and planning for a deployment.

The Office will scope, coordinate and design civilian technical assistance programs for stabilisation, recovery or state building activities. The office may work alone, with host governments or in joint assessment missions with coalition partners and multilateral agencies.

To support planning across the Australian Government for deployments, the Office of the Australian Civilian Corps includes representatives from a range of Australian Government Departments including the Department of Defence, and the Australian Federal Police.

History has shown that cooperation between peacekeeping operations, humanitarian responses and development activities needs to be improved. Coordination between the military, non-government organisations and civilian agencies is a major consideration in the planning and execution of deployments. The Australian Civilian Corps will have integrated planning with the Australian Defence Forces and the Australian Federal Police to ensure the effectiveness of joint deployments.

## Deployed personnel

Personnel on the Australian Civilian Corps register may be deployed at short notice. Register personnel will be expected to be able to deploy within 28 days for assignments up to three to six months. When deployed, personnel will be engaged as Commonwealth employees. Deployments will be for a fixed term and personnel will return to their regular place of work on completion of an Australian Civilian Corps assignment.

Australian Civilian Corps personnel will be paid a salary for the duration of their deployment. The remuneration package will reflect the particular conditions and hardships of each deployment.

Specialists will also have common characteristics including well-established technical skills and personal attributes appropriate for deployment into difficult environments such as flexibility, cross-cultural sensitivity and resilience.



Australian Civilian Corps personnel will adhere to a set of values. The values, tailored to the particular role of the Australian Civilian Corps in assisting countries recover from disasters and conflict will guide personnel and underpin the Civilian Corps operations. They will set out the principles, standards and ethics to be embodied by the Civilian Corps. They will also help guide selection processes.

### **In-country support**

Australian Civilian Corps personnel on assignment will require the right levels of support at the right time and place. Civilian Corps personnel must be able to devote maximum time to the achievement of their deployment objectives. The Office of the Australian Civilian Corps will arrange travel, transfers, accommodation and will provide Australian Civilian Corps personnel with the tools to get the job done such as transport and communications equipment. In-country support will always be on hand. This may be provided directly by the Australian Government or a contracted service provider.

### **Safety**

The safety of deployed civilian specialists is a priority for the Office of the Australian Civilian Corps. As deployed civilian specialists will be working in challenging environments, effective management of security and risk issues will be a key feature of the Australian Civilian Corps. During deployment planning, threat and risk assessments will be prepared and appropriate arrangements for security will be put in place.

### **Managing transition**

A smooth and positive transition for returning civilian specialists back to their workplace will be a priority of the Australian Civilian Corps. To assist Civilian Corps readjust to normal life, medical and psychological debriefing and support arrangements will be provided.



Credit: Lorrie Graham

**'We applaud our allies on this use of smart power and fully support the growing international trend of expanding and building on the important role civilians have played in maintaining and creating peace and stability.'**

**US State Department spokesperson Ian Kelly on the establishment of the Australian Civilian Corps,  
10 November, 2009**

# Governance arrangements

The Australian Civilian Corps is supported by a dedicated Office of the Australian Civilian Corps housed within AusAID, the Government's aid agency.

## Office of the Australian Civilian Corps

The Office of the Australian Civilian Corps within AusAID is responsible for:

- recruitment of civilian specialists onto the Australian Civilian Corps register
- ensuring that register personnel are prepared for deployment
- strategic planning for deployments
- managing deployments including logistics, human resource and security matters
- implementing public communication strategies
- providing support for whole-of-government input and advice.

The Office of the Australian Civilian Corps will provide appropriate deployment program design, risk-management and security arrangements for deployments. The Office consists of AusAID staff and secondees from other Government departments such as Prime Minister and Cabinet, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Defence, Australian Federal Police and the Australian Government Solicitor.

A high level Strategic Guidance Committee has oversight of the Australian Civilian Corps. Representatives from national security, foreign policy and finance departments form the Committee. Its role is to assess prospective deployments, provide strategic direction for prospective deployments, and monitor the effectiveness of both the Office of the Australian Civilian Corps and deployments.

## The Australian Civilian Corps and aid effectiveness

The Australian Civilian Corps is aligned to aid effectiveness principles. The Australian Civilian Corps will respond to partner countries' own requests for assistance and where possible, align deployments to partner countries' national development strategies, institutions and procedures. The Australian Civilian Corps respects partner countries' leadership, and will help strengthen their capacity to exercise it. It will harmonise its efforts with other donors, multilateral institutions and coalition missions to achieve measurable results.

## Moving forward

The Office of the Australian Civilian Corps is now establishing a fully operational Australian Civilian Corps. This includes setting up the register, identifying civilian specialists for initial deployments and vetting, recruiting and training those specialists, and establishing the necessary logistics and security mechanisms for deployments.

The Australian Civilian Corps is expected to be fully operational by 2011.

## Contact us

[www.ausaid.gov.au](http://www.ausaid.gov.au)

or

Assistant Director General  
Office of the Australian Civilian Corps  
GPO Box 887  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

02 6206 4220

Enquiries for the Australian Civilian Corps register can be directed to [www.ausaid.gov.au/acc](http://www.ausaid.gov.au/acc)



# A Definitions

### Capacity

Capacity is the ability of people, organisations and society as a whole to perform appropriate functions effectively, efficiently and sustainably. (AusAID)

### Capacity Development

Capacity development refers to the process of developing competencies and capabilities in individuals, groups, organisations, sectors or countries which will lead to sustained and self-generating performance improvement. (AusAID)

### Stabilisation

Ending or preventing the recurrence of violent conflict and creating the conditions for normal economic activity and nonviolent politics. (UK Stabilisation Unit, 'Helping Countries Recover from Violent Conflict.')

### Technical assistance

Technical assistance refers to the transfer, adaptation, mobilisation and utilisation of services, skills, knowledge and technology. It includes both short- and long-term personnel from both national and foreign sources, plus training, support equipment, consultancies, study visits, seminars and various forms of linkage. (AusAID)