



Australian Government

National Emergency Management Agency

# AUSRECEPLAN

**Australian Government Plan for the  
Reception of Australian Citizens and  
Approved Foreign Nationals Evacuated from  
Overseas**

# Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
1. Acronyms.....	4
2. Definitions.....	5
3. Authorising Environment .....	7
3.1. Authority.....	7
3.2. Amendments.....	7
3.3. Version Details.....	7
4. Introduction .....	8
4.1. Purpose.....	8
4.2. Scope.....	8
4.3. Out of Scope .....	8
4.4. Principles .....	8
Consideration of diverse groups.....	9
5. Roles and Responsibilities .....	9
5.1. Lead Minister .....	9
5.2. Australian Government Coordinating Agency .....	10
5.3. Lead Coordinating Senior Official .....	10
5.4. Sector Lead Agencies.....	11
5.5. Enabling Agencies .....	12
5.6. Jurisdictions and Repatriation Point Owners and Operators.....	14
6. Operational Activities.....	14
6.1. Overview .....	14
6.2. Phases and Activities.....	14
STANDBY.....	14
ALERT .....	15
ACTIVE.....	16
Deactivation and Post-Incident.....	18
6.3. Coordination Arrangements.....	19
Crisis Communication and Public Information .....	19
Inter-Departmental Emergency Taskforce (IDETF) .....	20
National Coordination Mechanism (NCM).....	20
Global Watch Office (GWO) .....	20
Crisis Centre.....	21
Australian Government National Situation Room (NSR).....	21

6.4.	Liaison Officers .....	21
6.5.	Inter-Agency Communications.....	21
7.	Financial Arrangements .....	22
8.	Associated Documents.....	22

# 1. Acronyms

---

<b>AGCMF</b>	Australian Government Crisis Management Framework
<b>CASP</b>	Crisis Appreciation and Strategic Planning
<b>CCT</b>	Australian Government Crisis Coordination Team
<b>DCG EMR</b>	Deputy Coordinator General, Emergency Management and Response
<b>Defence</b>	Department of Defence
<b>DFAT</b>	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
<b>EMR</b>	Emergency Management and Response
<b>GWO</b>	Global Watch Office
<b>LO</b>	Liaison Officer
<b>NCM</b>	National Coordination Mechanism
<b>NCM-AUSGOV</b>	Australian Government National Coordination Mechanism
<b>NEMA</b>	National Emergency Management Agency
<b>NJCOP</b>	National Joint Common Operating Picture
<b>NSR</b>	Australian Government National Situation Room

## 2. Definitions

---

<b>Approved foreign national</b>	A person who is not a citizen or permanent resident of Australia, but for whom the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of Home Affairs has approved evacuation into Australia.
<b>Australian Citizen</b>	A person who has acquired, by birth, descent, or through the process of naturalisation, Australian political and civil rights (including the right to vote, the right to work and reside in Australia indefinitely, and the right to an Australian passport).
<b>Australian Government Coordinating Agency</b>	The agency required to lead coordination across the Australian Government for a significant crisis caused by an identified hazard under the AGCMF. This agency also leads the consequence management activities within its agency functions and sector-specific responsibilities.
<b>Australian Government Crisis Communication Guidelines</b>	Provides guidance on coordinating whole-of-Australian Government crisis communication, including development and dissemination of talking points, media holding lines and response strategies for media management, and collaboration with state and territory operations centres.
<b>Australian Government Crisis Management Framework</b>	The Australian Government's capstone policy framing Australia's national crisis management arrangements.
<b>Australian Permanent Resident</b>	A person who holds a permanent residency visa but is not a citizen of Australia and may remain in Australia indefinitely.
<b>Departure point</b>	The place or port overseas from which evacuees depart for Australia.
<b>Early recovery</b>	The immediate and short-term measures for the restoration and improvement of the livelihoods, health, economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets, systems and activities of a crisis-affected community.
<b>Enabling Agency</b>	An Australian Government agency that administers relevant programs; provides specialist technical, scientific, intelligence or information capabilities; or conducts any other enabling activities to support consequence management activities.
<b>Evacuee</b>	A person who is extracted or withdrawn from a place of danger or disaster-declared area.
<b>Inter-Departmental Emergency Task Force (IDETF)</b>	The peak senior officials' crisis coordination mechanism during Australian Government responses to international crises between Tiers 1 to 3. The IDETF continues to coordinate international elements in a Tier 4 crisis.

<b>Lead Coordinating Senior Official</b>	The designated senior official within an Australian Government Coordinating Agency who is responsible for leading the coordination for a significant crisis.
<b>Lead Minister</b>	The Australian Government minister responsible for leading coordination in response to a significant crisis caused by an identified hazard under the AGCMF.
<b>Liaison Officer</b>	Departmental officer deployed to a departure point, repatriation point or an Australian Government or state or territory coordination centre to support the coordinated action of operational arrangements.
<b>National Coordination Mechanism (NCM)</b>	The crisis coordination mechanism under the AGCMF providing a national picture of crisis to governments and key stakeholders. The NCM provides the convening mechanism to bring together Australian Government, state and territory government, non-government and private sector representatives immediately before, during and after a crisis.
<b>Port of entry</b>	The first place or port within Australia at which evacuees arrive.
<b>Preparedness</b>	Near-term and longer-term arrangements to ensure that, should a crisis occur, the required resources, capabilities and services can be efficiently mobilised and deployed.
<b>Reception centre</b>	The evacuee processing centre set up at or near the port of entry, providing services such as customs, immigration, health assistance and screening, consular advice and assistance for approved foreign nationals, temporary accommodation and transport, as required.
<b>Relief</b>	Meeting the essential needs of food, water, shelter, energy, communications and medicines for people affected by a crisis event.
<b>Response</b>	Actions taken in anticipation of, during, or immediately after a crisis to ensure that its impact is minimised, and that those affected are supported as quickly as possible.
<b>Sector Lead Agency</b>	An Australian Government agency that contributes to whole-of-Australian Government crisis coordination activities and leads the consequence management activities relevant to agency functions and sector-specific responsibilities.
<b>Task Request</b>	A formal request issued by the National Emergency Management Agency to a state and/or territory government to stand up a reception centre and conduct associated operations.

## 3. Authorising Environment

### 3.1. Authority

The Australian Government Plan for the Reception of Australian Citizens and Approved Foreign Nationals Evacuated from Overseas (AUSRECEPLAN) derives its authority from the Australian Government Crisis Management Framework (AGCMF). The AGCMF outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Australian Government in preparing for, responding to and recovering from crises. It is the Australian Government's capstone policy framing Australia's national crisis management arrangements.

The AGCMF is underpinned by a range of national plans that set out hazard and sector-specific crisis management arrangements. AUSRECEPLAN is one such plan.

AUSRECEPLAN is prepared and maintained by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) in consultation with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). AUSRECEPLAN is approved by the Deputy Coordinator General of the Emergency Management and Response Group (DCG EMR) in NEMA and the First Assistant Secretary of the Consular and Crisis Management Division in DFAT.

### 3.2. Amendments

Recommendations for amendments or suggestions for improvement may be forwarded to:

Deputy Coordinator General  
Emergency Management and Response Group  
National Emergency Management Agency  
[EMRCoordination@nema.gov.au](mailto:EMRCoordination@nema.gov.au)

### 3.3. Version Details

Version #	Date of Issue	Brief description of change
3.2	2025	Administrative review to align with the updated Australian Government Crisis Management Framework
3.1	2017	Administrative review
3.0	2016	Strategic review; COMRECEPLAN renamed AUSRECEPLAN
2.0	2010	Strategic review
1.0	2002	COMRECEPLAN

## 4. Introduction

---

### 4.1. Purpose

AUSRECEPLAN outlines the mechanisms and coordination arrangements for the domestic support of international operations requiring the evacuation of Australian citizens, permanent residents and their immediate family members, as well as approved foreign nationals as a result of an international crisis. The reception of evacuees is supported by state and/or territory government-administered reception centres.

The arrangements set out within AUSRECEPLAN are not dependent on, nor do they hinder, the activation of other plans and standing arrangements.

### 4.2. Scope

AUSRECEPLAN applies to:

- The coordination and cost recovery for onshore reception arrangements for Australians and approved foreign nationals who are evacuated as a result of an international crisis.
- The processes for domestic support following a decision by the Australian Government to conduct an evacuation.

AUSRECEPLAN is activated only when considered necessary and may not be activated for every crisis response.

### 4.3. Out of Scope

AUSRECEPLAN does not apply to:

- Evacuation or reception arrangements occurring outside of Australia or its offshore territories.
- The provision of assistance in returning to the country of evacuation for Australians and approved foreign nationals.

### 4.4. Principles

Crisis events are typically variable, which require flexible responses. Therefore, a principles-based approach should be adopted, including:

1. Unity of effort will be encouraged, through a collaborative and coordinated approach, without removing individual agencies' legislative, ministerial and constitutional responsibilities.
2. Flexibility, improvisation and scalability in the system will be promoted, given the potential complexity and severity of overseas incidents.
3. Decentralisation of decision-making, supported by centralised strategic coordination and decentralised execution.
4. Support forward-looking decision-making and risk management with anticipatory analysis.
5. Foster interoperability and integrate civilian capabilities.
6. Be responsive and support elected officials' decision-making and crisis leadership.
7. Involvement of impacted jurisdictions in decision-making.
8. DFAT is the Australian Government Coordinating Agency responsible for the coordination of the evacuation of Australians and approved foreign nationals into Australia.
9. Evacuations of Australians and approved foreign nationals from overseas will be on a voluntary basis.
10. NEMA leads and coordinates the on-shore reception arrangements into Australia of evacuees from overseas. This is carried out in conjunction with jurisdictional governments.
11. Responsibility for approved foreign nationals will be passed to the relevant embassy or consulate upon their arrival into Australia. Approved foreign nationals are not normally expected to require assistance in Australia, however exceptions will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.



12. AUSRECEPLAN should be read in conjunction with the *Australian Government Guide for Financial Reimbursement*, which provides additional detail on financial arrangements.

## Consideration of diverse groups

Under AUSRECEPLAN, decisions and crisis communications need to consider the particular needs of people who may be disproportionately at risk of harm and ensure their inclusion in planning. This may include, but is not limited to:

- People with disability.
- People that are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- First Nations communities.
- Refugee and migrant populations.
- People experiencing or at risk of gender-based violence.
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual and other non-binary, non-cisgender (LGBTQIA+) people.
- Culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Where an evacuation involves persons requiring special assistance and support, the Australian Government and jurisdictions will negotiate specific arrangements.

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

---

Under AUSRECEPLAN, ministers, senior officials and their agencies have clear responsibilities to ensure Australian Government coordination and response activities are well-aligned and responsive as the impacts and consequences of the crisis evolves.

The roles of the Lead Minister, the Australian Government Coordinating Agency, the Lead Coordinating Senior Official, Sector Lead Agencies and Enabling Agencies under AUSRECEPLAN are outlined below.

### 5.1. Lead Minister

Under the AGCMF, the **Lead Minister** under AUSRECEPLAN is the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Minister for Foreign Affairs is responsible for:

- Overseeing a coordinated Australian Government response to the crisis and coordinating with Australian and jurisdictional counterparts.
- Exercising executive responsibilities and decision-making in consultation with Australian Government ministers.
- Providing advice to the Prime Minister, National Security Committee of Cabinet (NSC), other Committee of Cabinet or other ministerial decision-making bodies.
- Deciding to evacuate Australians and/or other approved foreign nationals, following a recommendation (where possible) by the Inter-Departmental Emergency Task Force (IDETF).
- Supporting the Prime Minister with relevant information to inform the potential recommendation for a National Emergency Declaration.
- Representing the Australian Government as the principal public spokesperson.
- Ensuring there are systems and procedures in place so that they are readily contactable.
- Ensuring the office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs maintains business continuity plans in the event that the office is affected directly by a crisis.
- Ensuring ministerial decisions and actions relevant to the crisis are recorded.

Should a crisis require Tier 4 coordination as defined by the AGCMF, the Prime Minister will become the Lead Minister. The Prime Minister may delegate some or all responsibilities to another minister.

## 5.2. Australian Government Coordinating Agency

The **Australian Government Coordinating Agency** for AUSRECEPLAN is DFAT.

DFAT is responsible for:

- Leading and coordinating whole-of-Australian Government international evacuation operations.
- Authorising and requesting DCG EMR to activate AUSRECEPLAN.
- Supporting the Lead Minister to execute their duties under AUSRECEPLAN.
- Determining tasks and coordinating their execution across the Australian Government, through mutual agreement with government agencies based on prioritisation and the strategic intent.
- The costs incurred from the response to an international crisis, including the costs incurred by state and territory governments to stand up a reception centre.
- At the point of departure, providing advice to NEMA and other relevant stakeholders on the number of evacuees, evacuation timings, clinical condition of evacuees, gender break-up, age groupings, languages, special needs and composition by nationality of approved foreign nationals if known.
- Convening, chairing and providing secretariat functions for the IDETF.
- Seeking approvals from the Australian Government and the government of the affected country to conduct an evacuation.
- Advising evacuees of the arrangements for reception and ongoing support upon arrival in Australia, including advising of their responsibility to arrange their own return travel if and when safe to do so.
- Arranging additional resources (military or commercial) and/or access to airports or ports for military or commercial assets if required.
- Identifying approved foreign nationals and working with the Department of Home Affairs and relevant governments on visa arrangements and the Australian Border Force to obtain uplift approval for approved foreign nationals.
- Liaising with foreign missions and if required, arranging for the relevant embassy or consulate officials to be present at the departure or reception points for approved foreign nationals.
- Issuing travel documents to Australian citizens as necessary.
- Determining what early recovery assistance may be required and leading coordination of Australian Government agencies during early recovery.
- Coordinating crisis communications, including establishing a Crisis Communication Cell in the DFAT Crisis Centre.
- Developing a crisis communication strategy and associated products such as whole-of-Australian Government talking points and media.
- Supporting crisis management capabilities by providing decision support briefing products.
- Maintaining business continuity plans to ensure the agency can continue to perform its role if it is affected directly by a crisis
- Maintaining records of decisions and actions relevant to the crisis.
- Conducting an after-action review and integrating lessons identified into relevant plans and processes in collaboration with relevant Australian Government agencies.

If a crisis is determined to require Tier 4 crisis coordination under the AGCMF, the Lead Coordinating Senior Official will transition Australian Government Coordinating Agency responsibilities to NEMA. DFAT will maintain responsibility for international crisis response as a Sector Lead Agency.

## 5.3. Lead Coordinating Senior Official

The **Lead Coordinating Senior Official** is the Deputy Secretary for consular and crisis management, DFAT who is responsible for:

- Ensuring DFAT is prepared and positioned to lead coordination of the evacuation of Australians and approved foreign nationals as a result of an international crisis.

- Convening and co-chairing AGCMF crisis forums (such as an IDETF and National Coordination Mechanism (NCM)), as well as other crisis forums where appropriate.
- Assessing the level of crisis coordination required, including establishing, reviewing and adapting the appropriate tier of coordination over the course of the crisis.
- Leading allocation of tasks across the Australian Government (via the IDETF or other relevant forums), through mutual agreement with government agencies based on prioritisation and the strategic intent set by the relevant agencies.
- Advising the Lead Minister, relevant agencies and other relevant senior decision-makers on coordination arrangements and actions being undertaken.
- Ensuring that a Crisis Communication Cell is embedded in the DFAT Crisis Centre to coordinate whole-of-Australian Government crisis communications products and strategy.
- Maintaining clear lines of communication with the office(s) of the Lead Minister.
- Communicating with other senior officials, to ensure streamlined coordination between relevant Australian Government agencies.
- In a Tier 4 crisis response, brief the National Cabinet, as required, to update state and territory First Ministers and supporting a nationally aligned response.
- Overseeing an after-action review led by DFAT and the integration of lessons identified into relevant plans and processes in collaboration with relevant Australian Government agencies.

#### 5.4. Sector Lead Agencies

Under AUSRECEPLAN, NEMA is the **Sector Lead Agency** responsible for the domestic components of the reception of evacuees. NEMA under AUSRECEPLAN is responsible for:

- Arranging the domestic reception of evacuees with the relevant Australian state and/or territory governments.
- Activating AUSRECEPLAN upon advice from DFAT and notifying relevant stakeholders, through the Australian Government National Situation Room (NSR).
- Liaising with state and territory counterparts to target response efforts.
- Convening and/or briefing AGCMF crisis forums on domestic reception arrangements.
- Providing shared situational awareness through the NSR.
- Supporting coordinated consequence management through the NCM.
- Establishing the Australian Government Crisis Coordination Team (CCT) to support response planning.
- Conducting a crisis planning process using the Crisis Appreciation and Strategic Planning (CASP) methodology (or similar methodology) and developing subsequent planning products, informed by crisis intelligence.
- Deploying Liaison Officers (LOs) into the DFAT Crisis Centre and domestic reception centres.
- Engaging with relevant state and/or territory governments about potential Task Requests.
- Creating and distributing AUSRECEPLAN Task Requests to relevant state and/or territory governments.
- Following the financial arrangements located in the *Australian Government Guide for Financial Reimbursement*.
- Managing and providing financial claims and reporting to DFAT.
- Proactively contributing to the whole-of-Australian Government crisis communications strategy, dissemination of crisis communications products and public information as led by DFAT (such as whole-of-Australian Government talking points and briefing materials).
- Contributing to an after-action review led by DFAT
- Maintaining business continuity plans to ensure the agency can continue to perform its role if it is affected directly by a crisis.
- Maintaining records of decisions and actions relevant to the crisis.

Other Sector Lead Agencies are also responsible for:

- Preparing for and leading the sector-specific consequence management activities in response to consequences within their own portfolios.
- Contributing to whole-of-Australian Government crisis communications products as led by the Australian Government Coordinating Agency.
- Managing risks related to the consequence management activities within their portfolios.
- Engaging with counterparts in states, territories and/or international jurisdictions as required.
- Contributing to an after-action review led by DFAT.

## 5.5. Enabling Agencies

The reception of evacuees under AUSRECEPLAN requires support activities from a wide range of agencies and providers.

Where required, Enabling Agencies may request or be requested to deploy LOs to the NSR to embed into the CCT, DFAT Crisis Centre and/or relevant state or territory reception centre.

Enabling Agency	Responsibilities
Airservices Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the safe and efficient management of airspace and air traffic flow for potentially time-critical evacuation operations.</li> </ul>
Australian Border Force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake border security and clearance processing functions at the identified port of entry for evacuees.</li> <li>• Process evacuees at the departure port (where practicable).</li> <li>• Support reception arrangements for identified High Risk Travellers (with Australian Federal Police).</li> </ul>
Australian Federal Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate law enforcement support for reception centres if required.</li> <li>• Provide command and control of security at ports of entry and reception centres within an airport precinct.</li> <li>• Support the escort of foreign nationals upon arrival in Australia as required.</li> <li>• Provide other specialist security services as required.</li> </ul>
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake biosecurity inspection of aircraft, passengers, goods, and associated cargo at designated entry ports and reception centres.</li> </ul>
Department of Defence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the event of a Defence-assisted evacuation, provide advice to Australian Government stakeholders on matters including: assisting DFAT with passenger manifests, anticipated arrival times, number of evacuees per Defence asset, evacuee demographics (gender, language, age, special requirements etc.) and any clinical condition reports as required.</li> <li>• Be prepared to receive a NEMA LO to aid in the reception of evacuees, where Defence property is to act as the entry port and/or reception centre.</li> </ul>
Department of Health, Disability and Ageing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise with relevant state and/or territory health authorities regarding potential clinical requirements, including psychological support for incoming evacuees, if required.</li> </ul>

Enabling Agency	Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advise on human biosecurity issues and work with Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Australian Border Force and state and/or territory health authorities to implement any necessary biosecurity measures.</li> <li>Liaise with relevant state and/or territory health authorities to provide evacuees with information relating to primary care and other jurisdictional health services available to them.</li> </ul>
Department of Home Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess visa applications or provide uplift approval for approved foreign nationals.</li> <li>Assist evacuees to maintain lawful visa status within Australia.</li> <li>In consultation with other agencies, advise on evacuees that may represent a 'high risk' to the Australian community.</li> <li>Provide Assisted Passage services to eligible refugee and humanitarian entrants (approved foreign nationals) to support their travel to Australia if required.</li> <li>Provide settlement support to eligible refugee and humanitarian entrants (approved foreign nationals) on arrival in Australia if required.</li> <li>Be a first point of contact to assist with the provision of interpreters or translators (via TIS National), if necessary.</li> </ul>
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist with curfew dispensation requests.</li> <li>Assist in facilitating access to Australian airports as required.</li> <li>Liaise with Defence in relation to air traffic requirements where military assets are utilised for evacuation operations, including through the Australian Civil-Military Air Traffic Management Committee, as required.</li> </ul>
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If required, seeking concurrence from the relevant jurisdictions' Premiers/Chief Ministers to conduct repatriation operations.</li> <li>Informing the Prime Minister and Cabinet of operations taking place under AUSRECEPLAN.</li> </ul>
Services Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide services at the relevant state or territory reception centre to support reception operations and incoming evacuees, as required.</li> <li>Provide advice on the provision of Medicare assistance to approved foreign nationals.</li> <li>Process income support payments and provide other services and payments to eligible evacuees as required.</li> </ul>

Under AUSRECEPLAN, all Enabling Agencies are responsible for:

- Contributing to whole-of-Australian Government crisis communications products as led by the Australian Government Coordinating Agency.
- Briefing crisis forums, including the NCM and IDETF, on Enabling Agency actions.
- Contributing to whole-of-Australian Government crisis communications products, including providing communications staff to form the Crisis Communication Cell.
- Maintaining clear lines of communication with the designated Australian Government Coordinating Agency, the NSR, as well as the office(s) of their own ministers.
- Providing advice on affected programs and legislation when required.

- Taking part in post-response after-action reviews.

## 5.6. Jurisdictions and Repatriation Point Owners and Operators

Under AUSRECEPLAN, states and territories are responsible for:

- Developing and maintaining jurisdictional reception plans.
- Activating relevant jurisdictional reception plans as appropriate.
- Arranging with airport/port owners to provide an appropriate Reception Centre within their jurisdiction.
- Upon acceptance of a task request, working with NEMA to establish a Reception Centre management team consisting of Australian Government and jurisdictional representatives.
- Appointing a Reception Centre Manager or equivalent.
- Providing reception services in accordance with the relevant jurisdictional arrangements.
- If required, activating relevant registration and reunification service(s) in accordance with jurisdictional arrangements.
- Meeting reporting and financial requirements, in the agreed format and timeframe as provided in the *Australian Government Guide for Financial Reimbursement*

Repatriation Point owners and operators are responsible for:

- Appointing a representative to coordinate the planning for and activation of relevant jurisdictional plans.
- Coordinating activation of facilities and support staff in accordance with jurisdictional arrangements.
- If required, providing an LO to the Reception Centre to coordinate information flow between the facility and the appointed Reception Centre manager.

## 6. Operational Activities

---

### 6.1. Overview

AUSRECEPLAN has three (3) phases: STANDBY, ALERT and ACTIVE. DCG EMR or delegate has the authority to initiate phase changes under AUSRECEPLAN, based on a request from the Deputy Secretary DFAT or delegate.

The NSR will advise relevant Australian Government agencies and jurisdictions of phase changes to AUSRECEPLAN.

### 6.2. Phases and Activities

#### STANDBY

AUSRECEPLAN is maintained in STANDBY phase as the default condition.

Under STANDBY the following activities may be undertaken:

DFAT will:

- Advise AUSRECEPLAN agencies and relevant Australian Government stakeholders about international crises which affect Australian interests.
- Maintain whole-of-Australian Government situational awareness for international crises that affect Australians and Australian interests through the Global Watch Office (GWO).



NEMA will:

- Maintain AUSRECEPLAN, including regular review and consultation with all AUSRECEPLAN agencies, state and/or territory governments.
- Undertake exercising and lessons management activities to support whole-of-Australian Government preparedness to activate AUSRECEPLAN.
- Maintain whole-of-Australian Government situational awareness through the NSR.

All AUSRECEPLAN Enabling Agencies, and state and/or territory governments, will:

- Maintain preparedness for the activation of AUSRECEPLAN.
  - Preparedness activities include but are not limited to: maintaining agency, state and/or territory response plans, capability development, and training and exercise activities.
- Undertake long/medium-term contingency planning for the anticipated activation of AUSRECEPLAN.
- Provide information to inform shared situational awareness to the DFAT Crisis Centre and the NSR.
- Monitor potential situations.
- Conduct contingency planning for potential responses.
- Undertake training and exercises in the use of AUSRECEPLAN.

## ALERT

ALERT phase is declared when an international crisis event is likely to lead to an evacuation and allows for jurisdictions and agencies to be brought to an enhanced level of preparedness.

Based on a request from DFAT, DCG EMR or delegate will authorise a phase change to ALERT.

Under ALERT the following activities are undertaken:

DFAT will:

- Advise NEMA, AUSRECEPLAN Enabling Agencies and other relevant Australian Government stakeholders about international crises which may affect national interests, including planning for the international evacuation of Australians and approved foreign nationals.
- Provide NEMA, AUSRECEPLAN Enabling Agencies, and state and/or territory governments with advice on the extent of the activities authorised and the financial delegation under this phase based on estimated costs provided by NEMA, where possible.
- Convene an IDETF, where required, to coordinate the whole-of-Australian Government response to the international crisis, including international evacuation arrangements.
- Conduct crisis planning, using the CASP methodology or similar methodology.
- Establish a Crisis Communications Cell, in line with advice provided in the Interim Australian Government Crisis Communications Guidelines.

NEMA will:

- Advise Australian Government and jurisdictional stakeholders of phase change to ALERT.
- Support crisis planning, using the CASP methodology or similar methodology.
- Facilitate shared situational awareness through the NSR.
- Be prepared to establish a CCT to support response planning and to provide situational awareness on domestic reception arrangements.
- Facilitate effective consequence management through the NCM and/or CCT.
- If required, develop and issue Task Requests if required to ensure readiness for an evacuation.
- Consult with relevant state and/or territory governments about potential Task Requests.
- Provide all stakeholders with regular updated incident information.

Relevant AUSRECEPLAN Enabling Agencies will:

- Undertake near-term contingency planning for the anticipated activation of AUSRECEPLAN.
- Support crisis planning, using the CASP methodology or similar methodology.
- Work with whole-of-Australian Government partners to develop implementation plans, determine timings and consider constraints.

- Continue monitoring of the situation.
- Provide all stakeholders with regular updated incident information.

State and/or territory governments should:

- Activate relevant response plans in anticipation of a Task Request.
- Engage with NEMA on capability and capacity to accept a potential Task Request.
- When requested, submit a cost estimate to stand up a reception centre in accordance with the *Australian Government Guide for Financial Reimbursement*.

ALERT phase automatically reverts to STANDBY phase after 72 hours unless advised otherwise.

## ACTIVE

On request from DFAT, and where an evacuation is imminent or underway to prevent threat of life, DCG EMR or delegate may authorise a phase change of AUSRECEPLAN to ACTIVE.

Under ACTIVE the following activities are undertaken:

With respect to the international components of a crisis, DFAT will:

- Advise NEMA and AUSRECEPLAN Enabling Agencies about arrangements for the planned international evacuation of Australians and approved foreign nationals.
- Convene an IDETF where required to coordinate the whole-of-Australian Government response to the international crisis, including international evacuation arrangements.
- Engage with relevant foreign missions as required on the evacuation of approved foreign nationals.
- Provide details of evacuating Australians and approved foreign nationals to AUSRECEPLAN Enabling Agencies, including transport manifests.
- Ensure planning remains relevant to the circumstances of the crisis.
- Maintain a Crisis Communications Cell.

The number of evacuees, the rate of evacuation, and hence the rate of arrival will depend on the situation in the location/s being evacuated, the number of evacuees available for departure and aircraft/ship capacity and availability. Every effort should be made to ensure that all relevant information is passed to the appropriate Australian Government and jurisdictional agencies at the reception points and the Reception Centre prior to arrival.

Evacuations may be by:

- Scheduled commercial flights/ships.
- Flights/ships chartered by the Australian Government.
- Australian Defence Force (ADF) aircraft/naval vessels.
- Foreign military aircraft/naval vessels from the country being evacuated or a third country.

With respect to the domestic components of a crisis, NEMA will:

- Advise Australian Government and jurisdictional stakeholders of phase change to ACTIVE.
- Provide shared situational awareness through the CCT/NSR.
- Support coordinated consequence management through the NCM.
- Establish a CCT to support response planning and to provide situational awareness on domestic reception arrangements.
- Support crisis planning using the CASP methodology or similar methodology, developing subsequent planning products, informed by crisis intelligence.
- Deploy LOs into domestic reception centres.
- Engage with relevant state and/or territory governments about potential Task Requests.
- Make AUSRECEPLAN Task Requests to relevant state and/or territory governments.

Relevant AUSRECEPLAN Enabling Agencies should:

- Conduct their appropriate responsibilities as identified in AUSRECEPLAN.



- Provide information to inform shared situational awareness to the CCT.
- Provide stakeholders with regular situational awareness and ongoing monitoring and reporting, including through feeding relevant information into the CCT.
- Regularly brief the Australian Government agencies and involved jurisdiction(s) on the status of Task Requests.

State and/or territory governments will:

- Engage with NEMA on capability and capacity to accept a potential Task Request.
- Accept or decline a Task Request.
- Complete required actions under the *Australian Government Guide for Financial Reimbursement*.
- Establish a reception centre to process incoming evacuees.

### **Reception centre arrangements**

All state and/or territory governments are responsible for maintaining their reception centre arrangements aligned to AUSRECEPLAN. All state and territory governments should maintain preparedness to activate reception centre arrangements in anticipation of an Australian Government Task Request.

When a Task Request is accepted, the tasked state and/or territory government must establish a reception centre for incoming evacuees at a location near the port of entry. The location of the reception points and the Reception Centre will be determined after consultation between the Australian Government and the involved jurisdiction/s.

The exact location will depend on the nature of the crisis, departure point from overseas, rate of evacuation, number of evacuated persons and the capacity to process the evacuated persons at the reception points. Processing of evacuated persons will be based on the use of existing jurisdictional civil infrastructure. However, in the event that a large number of evacuees are involved, Australian Government assistance may be required.

Assisted by relevant Australian Government agencies, the reception centre should provide at minimum:

- Security, customs, immigration and biosecurity screening.
- Evacuee registration and contact tracing where required.
- Consular advice and assistance for approved foreign nationals.
- Health services, including mental health/psychosocial support.
- Temporary emergency accommodation.
- Domestic travel advice and booking services.
- Social security assistance.
- Communication facilities (e.g. telephone, internet access).
- Access to banking facilities.
- Meeting areas for extended family.
- Provision of refreshments/meals.
- Toilets/showers.
- Access to local transport once evacuee processing complete.

Reception centre arrangements should also consider support for evacuees experiencing additional vulnerability, including but not limited to First Nations identification, disability status or risk of domestic violence.

### **Long-Term Accommodation**

It is the responsibility of evacuees to arrange their own long-term accommodation. Reception Centre managers may provide resources to support evacuees in arranging long-term accommodation.

### ***Transport Arrangements***

If there is a need to move a large group to or from temporary emergency accommodation, arrangements may be made by the jurisdiction.

Upon arrival in Australia, evacuees will be responsible for their own private transport between long-term accommodation and airports or other transport hubs.

### ***On-Forwarding Arrangements***

Upon arrival in Australia, arrangements for and payments of any on-forwarding is usually the responsibility of the evacuee, unless otherwise decided by the Australian Government based on a case-by-case basis.

Where transport from the Reception Centre is limited, the Australian Government and jurisdictions will coordinate access to additional resources.

### ***Categorisation of coordination response***

As the nature of a crisis changes over time, the Australian Government may shift and adapt coordination arrangements in accordance with the severity and complexity of the crisis. NEMA will consistently monitor and discuss the tiered arrangements and determine what level of coordination is required for a given crisis.

Tier 4 coordination may be triggered by an overseas crisis event where the complexity and severity of impacts and consequences requires the highest level of coordination across the full span of Australian Government interests.

If a crisis requires Tier 4 crisis coordination under the AGCMF, as agreed by relevant agencies including DFAT, NEMA and PM&C, DFAT will transition Australian Government Coordinating Agency responsibilities to NEMA to facilitate coordination of whole-of-Australian Government preparedness, response and early recovery.

The Lead Minister role will also transition to the Prime Minister who may wish to delegate some, or all, responsibilities to another minister (such as the Minister for Foreign Affairs).

The transition does not displace portfolio-specific responsibilities for responsible agencies and ministers as detailed in the AGCMF. Should a transition occur, DFAT will become a Sector Lead Agency and will retain, and continue to perform, its existing executive responsibilities as detailed in AUSRECEPLAN. DFAT will continue to support NEMA as the Australian Government Coordinating Agency following the transition.

### ***Deactivation and Post-Incident***

Upon completion of all active task requests (including those related to evacuation), and confirmation of no further requirement of Australian Government assistance, DFAT will request that DCG EMR or delegate approve the deactivation of AUSRECEPLAN, which will then revert to STANDBY.

NEMA advises appropriate stakeholders via email that AUSRECEPLAN has been deactivated.

DFAT will collate and record internal and external feedback for all responses undertaken during the activation of AUSRECEPLAN.

Lessons management processes are a critical element of AUSRECEPLAN, and ensure that opportunities for continuous improvement of AUSRECEPLAN and its associated arrangements are identified. Following deactivation, DFAT will conduct an after-action review and a lessons identified activity and will participate in those after action activities conducted by other parties. For Tier 3 or Tier 4 crisis coordination, a whole-of-Australian Government evaluation process is required under the AGCMF. The outcomes of the after-action reviews will be distributed across the Australian Government and will inform updates to AUSRECEPLAN.

All AUSRECEPLAN Enabling Agencies, and tasked state/territory governments, are responsible for:

- Undertaking an end-of-operation evaluation and lessons identified activity, co-led by DFAT and NEMA.
- Executing required actions under the *Australian Government Guide for Financial Reimbursement*.

### 6.3. Coordination Arrangements

Under the AGCMF, DFAT is responsible for coordinating whole-of-Australian Government situational awareness relevant to international crisis management through the Global Watch Office (GWO) and DFAT Crisis Centre.

NEMA is responsible for coordinating whole-of-Australian Government situational awareness relevant to domestic reception arrangements through the NSR.

Strict security measures may be in force leading up to the decision to conduct an evacuation. In these circumstances, planning and information sharing will be undertaken using appropriate channels.

Key mechanisms under the AGCMF that could be leveraged to respond to international crises requiring the evacuation of Australians and approved foreign nationals include the below.

#### Crisis Communication and Public Information

To ensure consistent messaging across government during AUSRECEPLAN activations, DFAT is responsible for coordinating whole-of-Australian Government key messages and public communication in relation to the crisis, evacuation operations and reception centre arrangements in alignment with the Australian Government Crisis Communication Guidelines.

NEMA can provide media support to DFAT and the relevant jurisdiction(s) as required. Support may include deploying media LOs as required to the DFAT Crisis Centre and/or reception centre.

Relevant Australian Government, state and/or territory government agencies may provide input to coordinated DFAT media products as required.

A Crisis Communication Cell will be established to support consistent public messaging. This cell will prioritise and coordinate messages, including public safety messages and whole-of-Australian Government talking points. Agencies involved in the response will be requested to provide lead communications staff to form part of the cell. Agencies are responsible for providing timely and accurate information related to their responsibilities to support prompt updates and dissemination of crisis communication products.

The Crisis Communication Cell will engage across governments, and with industry and stakeholders such as media outlets, to ensure information is provided to the public in a timely manner, thereby supporting safety messages and maintenance of public trust in crisis management systems. The Crisis Communication Cell will also identify key government spokespeople and will establish a daily tempo of public information updates.

The Crisis Communication Cell will be responsible for:

- Developing a whole-of-Australian Government crisis communications strategy.
- Coordinating crisis communications key messages and products with relevant states and territories.
- Determining products, channels and cadence of updates.
- Confirming key spokespeople and tempo of engagement.
- Liaising with media and public information officers across government, and other stakeholders including media outlets as required.
- Anticipating and resolving communication risks, including misinformation and disinformation.
- Incorporating and prioritising coordinated and consistent key messages across government, including public safety messages.
- Adjusting communications as the event, the media cycle and community needs evolve.

- Disseminating crisis communication products across the Australian Government, state and territory governments, industry and other stakeholders as required or deemed relevant.
- Supporting other areas of government that are organising media conferences.
- Supporting PM&C, the Prime Minister's Office and any other ministers on any crisis communication requirements.

## **Inter-Departmental Emergency Taskforce (IDETF)**

The IDETF is the peak crisis coordination forum managing the whole-of-Australian Government response to overseas incidents or crises between Tiers 1 to 3 that impact or threaten to impact Australians or Australian interests overseas. In a Tier 4 crisis the IDETF continues to coordinate international elements and reports to the NCM.

A Deputy Secretary DFAT (or delegate) chairs the IDETF and a Deputy Secretary PM&C (or delegate) may co-chair the IDETF.

The role of the IDETF can include:

- Maintaining near real-time shared situational awareness, including discussion of current impacts and clarifying priorities.
- Facilitating whole-of-Australian Government coordination and decision-making.
- Facilitating discussion of a whole-of-Australian Government strategic intent and agreed upon tasks.
- Informing a crisis communication strategy, including products and cadence.
- Ensuring national leadership and the maintenance of public trust in government systems.
- Recording, distributing, and tracking agreed actions.

## **National Coordination Mechanism (NCM)**

The NCM can be used for shared situational awareness, national coordination and synchronisation of effort under AUSRECEPLAN. It may bring together relevant Australian, state, territory and local government officials, industry, peak bodies, NGOs and eminent individuals for coordination, communication and collaboration. NCM participation can be restricted when required, as with the Australian Government NCM (NCM-AUSGOV). The NCM's communication and coordination with stakeholders will be aligned with the outcomes from the IDETF.

The relevant DCG NEMA (or delegate) convenes and chairs the NCM on behalf of the Australian Government, supported by NEMA. PM&C may elect to co-chair an NCM. Other relevant Australian Government agencies may co-chair, at the request of the NEMA chair or where they are the Australian Government Coordinating Agency. The role of the NCM can include:

- Facilitating whole-of-Australian Government domestic coordination and decision-making.
- Facilitating discussion of a whole-of-Australian Government domestic strategic intent and agreed-upon tasks.
- Maintaining near real-time shared situational awareness, including discussion of current impacts.
- Clarifying priorities to ensure community safety and stabilise systems.
- Informing crisis communication strategy, including products and cadence.
- Ensuring national leadership and the maintenance of public trust in government systems.
- Directly engaging with industry, NGOs and the private sector in alignment with the strategic intent and agreed tasks.
- Recording, distributing, and tracking agreed actions.

## **Global Watch Office (GWO)**

The Australian Government GWO in DFAT operates 24/7 to support the Australian Government's capacity to monitor and respond to emerging international events and crises that may have consequences for

Australians or Australian interests overseas. GWO reporting and analysis provides situational awareness and informs whole-of-Australian Government messaging on evolving events, while also supporting diplomatic posts in the event of a crisis.

## **Crisis Centre**

The DFAT Crisis Centre is the operational centre that implements and coordinates whole-of-Australian Government international crisis response. DFAT will activate the Crisis Centre in order to support its international crisis Australian Government Coordinating Agency responsibilities.

The Crisis Centre provides situational awareness to all relevant Government ministers and agencies and leads coordination of public communications during crisis. It is also the secretariat for the IDETF.

The Crisis Centre can operate 24/7. Australian Government agencies may deploy an LO into the Crisis Centre to facilitate coordination, collaboration and communication.

## **Australian Government National Situation Room (NSR)**

The NSR provides 24/7 all-hazards situational awareness, impact analysis and decision support through its crisis operations, intelligence and planning capabilities. Australian Government agencies, states and/or territories may be invited to deploy an LO into the NSR to embed into the CCT to facilitate coordination, collaboration and communication between the Australian Government and affected jurisdictions.

Situation reports from the NSR could include predictive analysis, impact assessments, actions being undertaken and activities to be prioritised. The National Joint Common Operating Picture (NJCOP) provides a near real-time, all-hazards platform designed to display all active significant crisis events. It provides a shared and common understanding both nationally and across borders during crisis events.

Agencies have a responsibility to keep the NSR informed of relevant information relating to overseas incidents, particularly if it has a domestic remit, so that the NSR can sustain situational awareness across the Australian Government.

## **6.4. Liaison Officers**

Prior to or during an event the DFAT Crisis Centre and the CCT may request an LO from another Australian Government agency and/or jurisdiction to be deployed to the Crisis Centre, CCT and/or the active reception centre, to assist in the coordination of Australian Government non-financial assistance or recovery assistance.

Additionally, NEMA may deploy an LO to reception centres to facilitate situational awareness and decision-making between the Australian Government and the jurisdiction.

## **6.5. Inter-Agency Communications**

While initial contact and liaison on matters relating to AUSRECEPLAN may be made by telephone, the primary means of communication between DFAT/NEMA and stakeholders will be by email. Alternative or overnight communication arrangements will be coordinated by the CCT or equivalent as the situation demands. All telephone requests are to be confirmed by email as soon as possible.

Ongoing communications between the DFAT Crisis Centre and CCT and relevant agencies should be supported by the provision of regular situation reports or by the LO where deployed to the respective jurisdiction.

It is the responsibility of agencies to provide the DFAT Crisis Centre, CCT or equivalent with appropriate contact details and to arrange internal distribution messages. All correspondence related to requests for non-financial assistance is documented by the DFAT Crisis Centre, CCT or equivalent.

## 7. Financial Arrangements

---

DFAT is responsible for the costs incurred from the response to an international crisis, including for the costs incurred by state and territory governments to stand up a reception centre. Unless there is prior agreement by all parties, Australian Government agencies are responsible for the costs incurred such as when they provide support or deploy LOs.

Response options developed by DFAT and/or NEMA will include cost estimates for the deployable capability, including extraordinary Australian Government costs associated with the deployment.

Financial arrangements for requesting agencies will be detailed in the formal Task Request sent to them from the DFAT Crisis Centre, CCT or equivalent, and generally the purchase of assets and equipment where the life of the item extends beyond the current operation will be ineligible for reimbursement. Any ambiguity relating to costs should be clarified prior to acceptance of a task. Jurisdictional agencies are not authorised to incur expenditure on behalf of the Australian Government until the receipt of and acceptance by the jurisdiction of a task request from NEMA.

The *Australian Government Guide for Financial Reimbursement* details the arrangements for making a claim on the Australian Government, following the completion of a tasking under an Australian Government plan. Australian state and/or territory governments must comply with the Guide including the provision of best-available cost estimates for DFAT consideration. A copy of the Guide will be provided to state and/or territory governments with a Task Request. Following completion of a tasking under AUSRECEPLAN, state and/or territory governments have 60 days to submit a claim for financial reimbursement from the Australian Government for the cost of domestic reception operations.

## 8. Associated Documents

---

Agencies should read AUSRECEPLAN in conjunction with the following documents:

- Australian Government Crisis Management Framework ([Australian Government Crisis Management Framework \(pmc.gov.au\)](https://pmc.gov.au/)).
- *Migration Act 1958*.
- *Customs Act 1901*.
- *Biosecurity Act 2015*.
- Australian Government Disaster Response Plan (COMDISPLAN) ([Australian Government Disaster Response Plan 2025 \(COMDISPLAN\)](#)).
- Australian Government Response Plan for Overseas Mass Casualty Incidents (OSMASSCASPLAN) ([Australian Government Response Plan for Overseas Mass Casualty Incidents Plan](#)).
- Australian Government Overseas Assistance Plan (AUSASSISTPLAN) ([Australian Government Overseas Assistance Plan](#)).
- The *National Emergency Declaration Act 2020* ([Federal Register of Legislation - National Emergency Declaration Act 2020](#)) and the National Emergency Declaration Aide-Memoire.
- *Australian Government Guide for Financial Reimbursement* – (available from NEMA).
- Crisis Appreciation and Strategic Planning Guidebook ([CASP Guidebook v.1.4 \(homeaffairs.gov.au\)](#)).
- Exercise in a Box (toolkit available from NEMA).
- Lessons in a Box (toolkit available from NEMA).