JOIN THE RAPID RESPONSE TEAM (RRT)

Expression of Interest – Australia Assists Rapid Response Team (RRT) roster.

Opens 11 November, closes 5pm AEDT, Monday 7 December 2026.
Applications assessed as received – apply early.

ABOUT AUSTRALIA ASSISTS

Australia Assists is the Australian Government's humanitarian deployment program, funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). It deploys technical specialists to partner governments, regional organisations and multilateral agencies to help countries prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters and crises across the Indo-Pacific and globally.

WHAT IS THE RAPID RESPONSE TEAM (RRT)?

When a disaster or crisis strikes, national authorities – often a National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) – are at the centre of the response, and the Australian Embassy or High Commission (Post) is under pressure too. Everyone already has a role, and the volume of coordination, information and decisions grows by the hour.

The Rapid Response Team (RRT) exists to assist in filling that gap. When requested, a small team of experienced specialists deploys **within 48 hours** for **up to 14 days**. Depending on the request, the team may embed with an NDMO or other national authority, or work at the direction of Post. Either way, it works within existing systems and priorities, with full respect for the partner government's sovereignty and decision-making.

The RRT is one of the Australian Government's deployable humanitarian response teams, alongside the Australian Medical Assistance Team (AUSMAT), the Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) and the Deployable Power Restoration Capability. It provides short-term surge technical support in response to sudden-onset disasters, with a particular focus on the Pacific and Southeast Asia, and contributes to a whole-of-government response alongside these teams and the Humanitarian Logistics Capability.

HOW AN ACTIVATION WORKS

1. **Request.** Support is requested by a partner government (through DFAT) or by Post.
2. **Team mobilised.** Australia Assists mobilises a team from the RRT roster with the skills the request calls for.
3. **Deploy.** The team deploys within 48 hours, fully supported with travel, security, insurance and logistics.
4. **Embed.** For up to 14 days, the team works on the tasks it is given – inside an NDMO or other national authority, or at the direction of Post.
5. **Hand over and debrief.** The team hands over to national counterparts or longer-term support, and takes part in a debrief and wellbeing check.

WHAT RRT MEMBERS DO

Provide on-the-ground surge support where it is most needed – for example, embedded with a National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), or working at the direction of Post (the Australian Embassy or High Commission)

- Assist with coordination, planning, communications and information management
- Assist with needs assessments and the write-up of assessment reports

Help coordinate the receipt and distribution of incoming humanitarian supplies

Provide technical advice relevant to their specific area of expertise, e.g. engineering advice to support the assessment of damaged infrastructure.

- Support liaison between national authorities, Post and other Australian deployed teams, so that Australian support speaks with one voice

Support Post and provide DFAT with real-time updates.

Case study: Nepal border floods, 2026

In late August 2026, catastrophic flash flooding triggered by a glacier collapse swept down the Bhote Koshi river along the Nepal–China border, destroying villages, roads and bridges and leaving many communities cut off. The death toll passed 1,000, with thousands more reported missing.

The Australian Government mobilised consular and humanitarian support, and within 48 hours committed an initial team of four humanitarian response specialists from the Australia Assists RRT. The RRT members brought expertise in disaster response, logistics, communications and operational planning, and were part of almost 50 Australian officials and specialists deployed to support search, rescue and recovery.

Sources: Minister for Foreign Affairs media releases, 28 August and 3 September 2026; DFAT Crisis Hub.

Case study: Vanuatu earthquake, 2024

In December 2024, a magnitude 7.2 earthquake struck Vanuatu, triggering landslides and building collapses and affecting an estimated 80,000 people. At the request of the Government of Vanuatu, the RRT embedded with the Vanuatu NDMO for 13 days, helping to fill critical gaps in planning and information management while supporting the NDMO's broader response.

"Responding to this disaster, which had a lot of damage – surge capacity really helped us. Everyone in the NDMO was busy because everybody already had an allocated role. Without them [RRT], it would have been harder, they really helped fill a gap." – Vanuatu NDMO Officer

WHY JOIN?

- Use your expertise where it makes an immediate, practical difference – inside the national response, not alongside it
- Work with a small, highly experienced team that collectively brings more than 100 years of humanitarian experience, including Pacific Island members
- Strengthen Pacific-led disaster response and build relationships with national authorities and Australian Posts across the region
- Short, focused deployments of up to 14 days that fit alongside your other work
- Quarterly online RRT meetings and full duty-of-care support on every deployment
- Be part of one of the Australian Government's deployable humanitarian response teams

WHO WE'RE LOOKING FOR

We are looking for people who combine strong technical skills and sound judgement to work effectively inside someone else's system. RRT members need to have effective communication and soft skills, with an ability to listen effectively to counterparts, work calmly under pressure and support their partner counterparts respectfully with recognition of the importance of local leadership. RRT roles are grouped into six streams – tell us which role profile fits you best:

Stream	Role profiles
Coordination & Leadership	• **Humanitarian Coordination Specialist** – government liaison, inter-agency and cluster coordination, sitreps, aligning international assistance with government priorities • **Emergency / Disaster Management Adviser** – incident management systems, EOCs, response, contingency and recovery planning • **Humanitarian Planning Adviser** – operational and scenario planning, resource prioritisation, response-to-recovery transition • **Project Management and Reporting Adviser** – project management, report writing, needs assessment reports and proposal development
Information & Analysis	• **Information Management Specialist** – situation reporting, data analysis, dashboards (e.g. Power BI), tracking requests and response activity • **GIS Specialist** – mapping and spatial analysis to support operational decisions • **Political-Economic / Stabilisation Adviser** – conflict and political economy analysis, stakeholder mapping; particularly relevant in civil unrest
Partnerships & Governance	• **Government Adviser** – supporting national authorities' response structures and decision-making • **Humanitarian Program Adviser** – donor coordination, humanitarian financing, partner engagement; supports Post / DFAT decision-making • **Civil-Military Coordination Adviser** – coordination between military assets, government agencies and humanitarian actors
Protection & Inclusion	• **Protection Adviser** – protection mainstreaming, child protection, PSEAH; ensuring systems consider vulnerable groups • **Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Specialist** – GBV prevention and response, case management and referral pathways • **Gender Adviser** – gender-responsive needs assessment and response • **Disability and Social Inclusion Adviser** – disability inclusion and access for marginalised groups across the response • **Community Engagement Adviser** – risk communication, rumour management, accountability to affected populations
Shelter, WASH & Infrastructure	• **Shelter Adviser** – emergency shelter and settlement needs assessment, shelter coordination, safe shelter and build-back-safer advice • **WASH Engineer** – rapid assessment of water supply, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure; emergency water treatment and distribution; advising on WASH priorities and repairs • **Public Health Adviser** – public health risk assessment, disease outbreak prevention, and links between WASH and health • **Structural / Civil Engineer** – rapid damage and structural safety assessments of buildings, roads, bridges and critical infrastructure; prioritising repairs; early recovery and reconstruction advice
Enabling Support	• **Humanitarian Logistics Adviser** – supply chain planning, receipt and distribution of relief supplies, customs and border processes, movement coordination • **Security Risk Adviser** – security risk assessment, crisis management, access analysis (advisory, not protective security)

We are also interested in areas such as Anticipatory action / forecast-based financing, disaster risk reduction, climate adaptation, social protection in emergencies, cash and voucher assistance, recovery and resilience planning, and urban crisis management.

Where you're based

You must live in Australia within 2 hours of an airport, so that you can be on the ground within 48 hours of an RRT activation.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS (MUST MEET ALL)

Requirement	Description
M1. Location and 48-hour deployability	Living in Australia, within 2 hours of an airport, and able to deploy within 48 hours of activation for up to 14 days.
M2. Year-round availability	Available to deploy for at least three months in any 12-month period (the months do not need to be consecutive). This is availability only – it does not mean you will be deployed for three months. Each deployment is up to 14 days.
M3. Employer support	If you are employed, your employer agrees to release you at short notice to deploy, confirmed through an employer release form (renewed each year).
M4. Deployment readiness	A passport with at least 18 months until expiry; able to provide a satisfactory police check and references, pass a medical check by a registered GP, and keep required vaccinations up to date.
M5. Core training	Has completed Hostile Environment Awareness Training (HEAT) and Essentials in Humanitarian Practice (EHP) training, or equivalent field experience, or is willing to complete the training before joining the RRT.
M6. Eligibility	Confirm any citizenship / right-to-work requirements, consistent with existing Australia Assists roster eligibility

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA (ADDRESS THESE IN YOUR STATEMENT)

Criterion	Description
E1. Technical expertise	Demonstrated, current expertise in at least one RRT role profile, with the ability to apply it quickly in an unfamiliar operating environment.
E2. Sudden-onset emergency experience	At least ten years of humanitarian, disaster or crisis management experience, including at least two field deployments or operational roles in the response phase of a sudden-onset emergency.
E3. Working with and through government	Experience supporting a national government, disaster authority (e.g. an NDMO) or diplomatic mission in a crisis, with a clear understanding of working at the direction of a host government or Post, and respecting the host government's sovereignty and leadership.
E4. Humanitarian principles and systems	Sound working knowledge of humanitarian principles, the international humanitarian architecture (including the cluster system, UN agencies, Red Cross / Red Crescent and NGOs), and safeguarding and PSEAH obligations.
E5. Teamwork, judgement and resilience	Ability to work effectively in a small, self-reliant team under pressure, in austere conditions, with sound judgement, cultural humility and good self-care.

DESIRABLE

- Experience in the Pacific or South and Southeast Asia, ideally with an NDMO, national emergency operations centre or Australian diplomatic mission
- Pacific language skills
- Experience on other surge or standby rosters (e.g. UN, Red Cross / Red Crescent, NGO or government surge mechanisms)

- Current first aid certification
- Skills in areas such as: Anticipatory action / forecast-based financing, disaster risk reduction, climate adaptation, social protection in emergencies, cash and voucher assistance, recovery and resilience planning, and urban crisis management

WHAT BEING ON THE ROSTER INVOLVES

Area	Arrangement
Employment	RRT members are employed by Tetra Tech International Development on a casual basis. As a casual role, there are no guaranteed hours, pattern or availability of work.
Deployment	Within 48 hours of activation, for up to 14 days.
Availability	Be available to deploy for at least three months in any 12-month period. This is availability, not deployment time – each deployment is up to 14 days, and availability for each activation is confirmed at the time. Roster membership does not guarantee deployment.
Remuneration	Current daily fees are noted below. These fees represent the daily rate once an RRT members has been placed on stand-by to deploy within 48 hours. The daily rate is paid for up to 16 consecutive days (2 days travel and 14 day deployment). RRT Team Leader Daily Rate: AUD $1,673 (once placed on standby) (inclusive of superannuation). There is 1 Team Leader with every RRT deployment. RRT Team Member Daily Rate: AUD $1,338 (once placed on standby) (inclusive of superannuation for Australian deployees) A daily living allowance is also paid, and is based upon the location the RRT deploys to, in line with the Australia Assists Remuneration Framework and Entitlements Policy. Travel, accommodation and insurance are arranged and covered for every deployment. An annual onboarding completion payment of AUD$400 (after tax) is paid once you complete compulsory online training, including the Introduction to Australia Assists module and a medical assessment, paid within one month of signing your contract, and then annually to ensure training and medical compliance.
Training	Complete compulsory online RRT training and attend briefings to understand how the RRT works, the expectations of RRT members and an opportunity to meet fellow RRT members and the Australia Assists program team.
Staying connected	Quarterly online RRT meetings and you may also be invited to relevant events and training, such as DFAT's Deployable Teams Day.
Equipment	You will be issued a Tetra Tech laptop, or Tetra Tech software can be installed remotely on your own laptop. RRT kits are held by the program for Australia-based members and issued on activation.
Annual requirements	Each year: confirm you wish to remain on the RRT and update your contact and next-of-kin details; keep your passport valid for at least 18 months (renewal is at your own cost); resubmit your employer release form; complete compulsory online refresher training; complete an annual medical check and keep immunisations up to date (medical and immunisation costs are reimbursed).
Duty of care	Pre-deployment briefings, security support, psychosocial support and post-deployment debriefs.

IF YOU ARE OFFERED A PLACE

You will need to complete standard Australia Assists onboarding, including:

- Police check, current CV and reference checks
- Evidence of completed HEAT and Essentials in Humanitarian Practice (EHP) training, or equivalent field experience
- Employer release form (if you are employed)
- Medical check by a registered GP (cost reimbursed)
- Up-to-date vaccinations: chickenpox (varicella), diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis, influenza, measles-mumps-rubella (MMR), polio, shingles, COVID-19 (including booster), hepatitis A, hepatitis B, typhoid, yellow fever and rabies (costs reimbursed where needed)
- A short RRT bio summary
- Compulsory online training, including the Introduction to Australia Assists module, within one month of signing your contract

HOW TO APPLY

Apply via application portal link. Please provide:

1. **A statement of no more than two pages** naming your role profile and addressing essential criteria E1–E5. Use specific examples: the situation, what you did, and what difference it made.
2. **Your current CV** (maximum four pages).
3. **The availability and readiness form** at Attachment A.
4. **Two referees**, at least one a supervisor in an emergency context.

We assess the substance of your experience, not the polish of your writing. Plain language is welcome.

HOW YOU WILL BE ASSESSED

Applications will be assessed on a rolling basis. Your application will be assessed by a member of the Australia Assists program team against the criteria. The Australia Assists program team will be in touch with shortlisted candidates to further discuss their application and explore their suitability to join the RRT.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHERE DO I NEED TO BE BASED?

You must live in Australia and for the time that you are rostered on (up to 3 months of the year) you must live within 2 hours of an airport, so that you can reliably deploy within 48 hours.

DOES MY EMPLOYER NEED TO AGREE?

Yes. If you are employed, your employer needs to agree to release you at short notice, confirmed through an employer release form that is renewed each year.

IS THIS A JOB?

RRT members are employed on a casual basis by Tetra Tech International Development. There are no guaranteed hours or work – you are paid when you deploy, with fees and allowances based on the deployment location.

HOW OFTEN WILL I BE DEPLOYED?

It depends on the number and type of requests and on your availability and skills. Some members may deploy more than once a year; others may not deploy each year.

CAN I SAY NO TO AN RRT ACTIVATION?

If you are rostered on, and the RRT is activated, you are expected to deploy, unless there is a reasonable reason to excuse yourself from the deployment. Any additional RRT members who are called upon to deploy, but not rostered on, can say no to an RRT activation.

I'M ALREADY ON ANOTHER SURGE ROSTER. CAN I APPLY?

Yes – please tell us in your application, so that we can understand any availability conflicts.

HOW IS THE RRT DIFFERENT FROM OTHER AUSTRALIA ASSISTS DEPLOYMENTS?

Most Australia Assists deployments are longer-term placements with a host organisation. The RRT is a short, rapid surge mechanism (up to 14 days) to support a national authority or Post in the immediate response to a sudden-onset disaster.

QUESTIONS AND SUPPORT

Contact Ebony Laurie, at ebony.laurie@australiaassists.org or enquiries@australiaassists.org. If you need any adjustments to take part in the process, let us know – it will not affect how your application is assessed.

Australia Assists is committed to a diverse and inclusive roster. We welcome applications from people of all backgrounds, including First Nations people, people with disability and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Information you provide will be handled in line with Tetra Tech International Development's privacy policy and used only for this recruitment and roster management.

ATTACHMENT A – AVAILABILITY AND READINESS FORM

Item	Your response
Full name	
Nationality / residency	
Current location (city, country)	
Primary RRT role profile (see streams)	
Secondary role profile (optional)	
Languages spoken (and level)	
Nearest airport and travel time from your home	
Can you deploy within 48 hours for up to 14 days? (Yes / No / With conditions – please explain)	
If employed, will your employer agree to release you at short notice? (Yes / No / Not sure / Self-employed)	
Can you be available to deploy for at least three months in any 12-month period? (Yes / No – indicate which months if known)	
Expected availability over the next 12 months (note any known unavailable periods)	
Passport nationality and expiry date	
HEAT and Essentials in Humanitarian Practice (EHP) training completed? (dates), or describe equivalent field experience, or confirm you are willing to complete	
Other surge rosters you are a member of	
How did you hear about this EOI?	
Any adjustments you need for the assessment process	

Declaration: I confirm the information in my application is true and correct, and I consent to Australia Assists contacting my referees.

Signature: _____ Date: _____