

DFAT HUMANITARIAN LOGISTICS FRAMEWORK 2018-2028

The purpose of this framework is to articulate a strategic approach to the role that logistics play in supporting Australia's capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies abroad.

1. Australia's humanitarian objectives

The goal of Australia's humanitarian action is to save lives, alleviate suffering and enhance human dignity during and in the aftermath of conflict, disasters and other humanitarian crises, as well as to reduce risks from and strengthen preparedness for the occurrence of such situations. To achieve this, Australia's humanitarian investments focus on four strategic objectives:

1. Strengthen international humanitarian action by supporting reform and innovation to ensure a system that is fit for purpose;
2. Investing in disaster risk reduction with a particular focus on our region;
3. Supporting regional preparedness and response capabilities; and
4. Enabling early recovery efforts.¹

Australia seeks to play a leading role in the Indo-Pacific region – and around the world – in providing best-practise humanitarian response and supporting innovation and change in the regional and global humanitarian response system. DFAT's humanitarian logistics capability is a critical tool in playing that leadership role.

2. An effective logistics capability is essential

Effective and timely storage, transport and deployment of humanitarian supplies is of central importance to DFAT's humanitarian response capability. This is especially the case in the Pacific region, where Australia plays a leading role in humanitarian responses.

The current configuration involves Australia-based warehoused stockpiles, pre-positioning of supplies with national disaster management authorities and partner organisations, and a partnership with the UN Humanitarian Relief Depot (UNHRD) Network to extend Australia's reach globally. This posture continues to evolve over time.

DFAT's humanitarian logistics capability is also highly relevant to DFAT's consular crisis management capability, and coordination between the two presents significant potential for enhanced efficiency and effectiveness on both sides.

3. Logistics underpin partnerships

The operation of DFAT's humanitarian logistics capability supports DFAT's relationships with a wide range of partners. The level of coordination and ease-of-interaction between that humanitarian

¹ DFAT Humanitarian Strategy 2016, May 2016.



logistics capability and DFAT's partners has the potential to strengthen or undermine those partnerships, and our broader humanitarian response.

Those relationships include within DFAT (e.g. consular section, country programs); within the Australian Government (particularly the Australian Defence Force, but also other government agencies); with the partner country (e.g. Emergency management authorities, Defence, Customs), with DFAT's implementing partners (e.g. Red Cross, NGOs, UN agencies), and among the broader international response (e.g. other donors).

Effective pre-planning and smooth interoperability with other response components are essential.

4. Change and innovation in humanitarian logistics

The global approach to disaster risk reduction, humanitarian preparedness and response continues to evolve over time. The 2016 World Humanitarian Summit saw greater prominence given to localisation of humanitarian assistance – with international support intended to reinforce rather than replace local systems – and to cash transfers as a primary mechanism for humanitarian response. Likewise, improved coherence between humanitarian response, early recovery and recovery activities is the subject of an ongoing global dialogue.

Partner countries' appetite for foreign humanitarian assistance following an emergency varies. At the same time, global logistical arrangements continue to evolve with changes in global supply chains and advancement in various technologies.

5. Enduring priorities for DFAT's humanitarian logistics capability

Against this backdrop of change, over the life of this framework DFAT will retain an enduring commitment to the following priorities for its humanitarian logistics capability:

- i) **Timely response:** Saving lives, alleviating suffering and enhancing human dignity by ensuring that appropriate supplies arrive where they are needed as soon as possible after a humanitarian emergency and within 48 hours of a 'request for assistance'. This is likely to require a combination of warehoused relief supplies, pre-positioning, cash transfers and other approaches.
- ii) **Coordination:** participation in the OCHA/national logistics cluster, as part of a harmonised international response to humanitarian emergency. In particular, close coordination and collaboration will be prioritised with:
 - Partner governments and their established national disaster management offices
 - The Whole-of-Government response mechanism, especially Australian Defence Force who will remain a critical partner in many humanitarian responses
 - DFAT's other humanitarian partners, such as UN agencies, Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement partners, Australian Humanitarian Partnership NGO partners and DFAT's civilian deployment capabilities (AUSMAT and DART)
 - Other parts of DFAT, particularly country programs and Consular Crisis Management and Contingency Planning Section.

- iii) **Public diplomacy:** Ensuring appropriate public awareness in Australia and in the partner country will remain an enduring priority in Australia's humanitarian responses. DFAT's humanitarian logistics capability frequently presents excellent opportunities to communicate the message of Australia's role in the response.
- iv) **Value for money:** Ensuring the best use of Australian taxpayers' money is at all times a critical consideration in the utilisation of DFAT's humanitarian logistics capability.
- v) **Performance and risk management:** The role played by logistics in humanitarian and emergency response requires robust monitoring and risk management systems to demonstrate efficiency and effectiveness. Given the urgency of humanitarian response, its life and death nature and the disrupted operating environment in which it occurs, such systems need to be proportional and fit for purpose.
- vi) **Innovation:** Continually improving practices and embracing new opportunities is an important mechanism for enhancing effectiveness and maintaining value for money.
- vii) **Localisation:** Reinforcing rather than replacing local systems and markets will enhance effectiveness and long-term impact.
- viii) **Disability inclusion, gender and protection:** These are thematic priorities that are central to the efficacy of Australia's humanitarian programming, on which Australia will continue to play a leading role.
- ix) **Strong focus on our immediate region:** Especially the Pacific region but maintaining the capacity for Australia to reach outside of the region and to act globally where needed.

6. Review and update of the logistics framework

The framework will function as a 'living' document, and will be internally reviewed and updated every two years.