

## *Guideline for JCU Staff Attendance at Global Emergency Incidents/Events*

### **Purpose**

This guideline provides JCU Management and Staff with a process to approve requests to deploy expert human and technical resources for rapid identification, confirmation and response to outbreaks of international importance as coordinated by the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN).

This guideline will also assist with the management of Staff Members who request to deploy with other international volunteer organisations in times of international importance such as Australian Medical Assistance Teams (AUSMAT), Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders (MSF) and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

JCU recognises the humanitarian importance for applicable Staff choose to contribute to these incidents/events. This guideline is to be read in conjunction with the [JCU Leave Procedure](#).

### **Eligibility**

Continuing and Fixed Term Academic and Professional and Technical Staff Members who meet specific criteria to attend global incidents due to expertise in their field.

This guideline does not apply to Casual staff, Undergraduate or Postgraduate Students (including Higher Degree by Research Students), or other affiliates i.e. adjuncts, conjoints, contractors and volunteers etc.

### **Definitions**

#### **Australian Medical Assistance Teams (AUSMAT):**

AUSMAT are multi-disciplinary health teams incorporating doctors, nurses, paramedics, fire-fighters (logisticians) and allied health staff such as environmental health staff, radiographers and pharmacists, designed to be self-sufficient, experienced teams that can rapidly respond to a disaster zone to provide life saving treatment to casualties, in support of the local health response. Teams assist with humanitarian responses and strengthen both local and international health systems of countries in our region. AUSMAT is one of the few World Health Organisation (WHO) globally-verified [Emergency Medical Teams](#). AUSMAT members are leading contributors to [WHO activities](#) to establish global standards on medical assistance during disasters.

## Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN):

A network of institutions coordinated through WHO including non-governmental organisations, academic and research institutions, United Nations agencies, and other specialised public health institutions and organisations capable to provide human and technical resources for alert, risk assessment and response to public health emergencies of international importance.

## GOARN Primary Focal Point:

A JCU Staff Member who is an existing Network member authorised to receive and distribute communication from the Network. In JCU, this Staff Member may ordinarily be attached to the Discipline of Public Health.

## International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC):

ICRC protects the lives and dignity of people affected by conflict. It can reach people in need in the most difficult environments by protecting and assisting civilians affected by armed conflict and other situations of violence; promoting and strengthening adherence to international humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles through training and advocacy; delivering emergency medical assistance, food, water and shelter for millions affected by conflict and violence.

## International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent:

Australian Red Cross is one of Australia's most trusted and effective partners in disaster preparedness and response. Through the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies the Australian Red Cross is part of largest humanitarian network in the world, with links to 190 National Societies around the world. Australia's partnership with the Australian Red Cross helps strengthen disaster preparedness, builds resilience and increases public awareness.

## Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders (MSF):

MSF is the leading private international association for medical humanitarian aid. The association is made up mainly of doctors and health sector workers and is also open to all other professions which might help in achieving its aims. MSF provides assistance to populations in distress, to victims of natural or man-made disasters and to victims of armed conflict.

## Outbreak/Incident/Health Emergency:

A public health or other event of significant international importance as determined and advised by WHO.

## WHO:

The World Health Organisation's primary role is to direct and coordinate international health within the United Nations system. The main areas of work are health systems; health through the life-course; non-communicable and communicable diseases; preparedness, surveillance and response; and corporate services. WHO maintains the GOARN Operational Support Team to ensure the development and operations of the network and that the right technical expertise and skills are on the ground where and when they are needed most.

## Nomination Procedures

### Staff Membership with Volunteer Organisations

JCU Staff Members can apply on their own accord to become members of an international volunteer organisation including GOARN, AUSMAT, MSF and ICRC, based on their area of expertise and willingness to assist in public health and/or other emergencies around the world. This is considered voluntary and not a requirement of their JCU employment.

### Global Outbreak and Response Network

#### Organisation Commitment Agreement

The applicable JCU Delegate shall sign an Organisation Commitment Agreement acknowledging JCU's involvement, expectations and responsibilities when participating in deployments of this nature.

#### Changes to Agreement

If amendments to the agreement are necessary ie. Change of GOARN Primary Focal Point, a new Organisation Commitment Agreement form shall be updated and signed by both parties.

#### Cancellation of Agreement

The agreement will remain in place unless written advice is made to WHO withdrawing the University's involvement or vice versa.

#### Filing of Agreement

Copies of the Agreement should be maintained with the Offices of the Vice Chancellor/Provost, Legal Unit and the relevant Division/College.

#### Emergency Notification/Advice

WHO will issue an alert email to the Network Primary Focal Points to identify experts who could be called upon for potential deployment to support preparedness and readiness, generally with short notice.

Depending on the nature of the request, the Network Primary Focal Point Staff Member may communicate advice to other Divisions across the University to determine staff suitability/availability, based on the identified need.

JCU (through its GOARN Network members) assesses available Staff Members with the necessary requirements as stipulated in the alert advice. Further important information is available for Staff Members through the GOARN Request for Assistance Response document issued at the time.

If a JCU Staff Member is deemed suitable and can be released from their current duties, the Staff Member shall upload their CV, availability date range, maximum duration for deployment and position(s) applied for, to WHO via the GOARN knowledge online platform in a timely manner.

The link will be available on the respective alert notification. Staff Member offers to support can only be submitted through this platform.

WHO will advise whether the Staff Member is accepted for deployment.

If accepted, WHO will issue the Staff Member with a contract outlining expectations and responsibilities for the identified period.

### **Entitlements of JCU Staff on GOARN deployment**

All travel, accommodation and insurance options will be provided and arranged by WHO direct with the Staff Member as per supplied information.

Staff Members wishing to undertake these deployments should ensure they clearly understand the voluntary 'at own risk' nature of the deployment. Any questions should be directed to WHO for clarification.

JCU strongly encourages Staff Members to seek independent advice regarding individual travel/health insurance as you will NOT, in all likelihood, be covered by JCU's workers' compensation benefits during that deployment.

### **All Other International Volunteer Organisations**

Staff Member receives advice of emergency event directly as part of their membership with that international volunteer organisation.

If Staff Member wishes to attend an emergency event, they should firstly speak with their Supervisor to determine availability and approval.

### **Entitlements of staff on other Organisation deployment**

JCU will NOT be responsible for any travel, accommodation or insurance costs associated with this deployment.

Staff Members wishing to undertake these deployments should ensure they clearly understand the voluntary 'at own risk' nature of the deployment. Any questions should be directed to the relevant organisation for direct clarification.

JCU strongly encourages Staff Members to seek independent advice regarding individual travel/health insurance as you will NOT, in all likelihood, be covered by JCU's workers' compensation benefits during that deployment.

## **Applying for Global Emergency Leave**

The Staff Member shall apply for Global Emergency leave through MyHROnline for the duration of approved specified period. This leave will include payment of all allowances currently being received by the Staff Member and will be considered continuous service for leave purposes.

This could generally be up to 4 weeks however sometimes longer periods may be requested. The relevant Dean/Director/PVC would approve this leave along with any subsequent leave approvals for the same event.

Alternate arrangements should be made for Staff Member's current duties to be covered/redistributed where necessary.

## Academic Workload Considerations (where applicable)

For Academic Staff Members, although this deployment could be viewed as Teaching and Learning activities (professional experience/development) under the academic workload model, it is acknowledged that the time spent away would skew the percentage of time needed for other activities required in the workload model for that year.

Where approved, this deployment period will be shown as global emergency leave and work profile hours adjusted to meet the revised agreed workload model and reflect absence from the workplace.

The experience will still count as evidence for promotional opportunities.

## Communications

The Staff Member shall provide their Supervisor with contact details of a relevant representative from the volunteer organisation, in the event of an individual emergency affecting the JCU Staff Member whilst on deployment.

During the deployment, the Staff Member shall make arrangements to keep in regular contact, by an agreed method, with the Dean/Director/PVC and/or their direct Supervisor as directed.

The relevant Dean/Director/PVC shall contact the Head, Media and Communications Unit, regarding JCU’s commitment to the domestic/international health emergency incident/event and provide updates as necessary.

## Supporting Documentation

Please refer to the [JCU Leave Procedure](#) web page for further information on applying for this leave.

GOARN Organisation Commitment Agreement  
GOARN Request for Assistance Response Terms

## Administration

### Approval Details

Policy Sponsor and approver of guidelines	Dean, College of Public Health, Medical and Veterinary Sciences Division of Tropical Health and Medicine
Date for next review	01/01/2023

## Revision History

Version	Approval date	Implementation date	Details	Author
1.0	14/04/2020	01/12/2019	Original Guideline established and GOARN Commitment Agreement signed	Maxine Whittaker