

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

GOARN

Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network

ORGANISATION COMMITMENT AGREEMENT

Thank you for joining the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN). GOARN is a network of institutions 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. WHO maintains the GOARN Operational Support Team to ensure the development and operations of the network.

By joining the network, GOARN Operational Support Team and James Cook University will:

James Cook University will:

- Nominate focal points in the institution, including one primary focal point, to act as the main points of contact for GOARN related activities and response operations.
- Provide technical knowledge and expertise for GOARN related activities, response operations and GOARN areas of work when possible/appropriate.
- In response to GOARN Requests for assistance (RFA) nominate experts to deploy to the field or incident management hubs to support response activities when possible/appropriate. This may often be at the short notice.
- Keep institutional profile for James Cook University on the secure GOARN Knowledge platform updated.
- Using secure GOARN Knowledge platform, share information about activities of the institution which are relevant to GOARN.
- Share information about any of the ongoing events and operations which are being monitored by GOARN.
- Treat confidential and restricted information shared by GOARN OST and Partner institutions (through the knowledge platform, emails, teleconferences etc.) as privileged and not share further outside their institution.

GOARN JCU Primary Focal Point:

Professor Maxine Whittaker
James Cook University
1 James Cook Drive
Townsville, Queensland 4811
Australia
deancphmvs@jcu.edu.au

Signatory:  Date: 14 April 2020

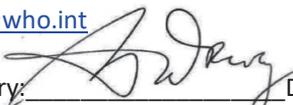
~~Vice Chancellor/Provost~~

GOARN Operational Support Team will:

- Engage James Cook University in activities of GOARN, including response operations and areas of work.
- Keep focal points in James Cook University informed about activities of the network, including meetings, and training courses for experts from GOARN partner institutions.
- Keep focal points in James Cook University informed about ongoing public health events which may require support from GOARN.
- Provide focal points in James Cook University with all GOARN Alerts and Requests for assistance (RFA).
- Support deployment of experts from James Cook University to the field, as per standard WHO rules and regulations.
- Provide focal points in James Cook University with secure access to the GOARN Knowledge Platform. The platform contains information about events, operations, partner institutions and activities of the network.
- Keep focal points in James Cook University informed about activities of the GOARN Steering Committee (SCOM) including upcoming elections of the new SCOM members. Each GOARN Institution is eligible to apply for the SCOM membership.

GOARN Operational Support Team

Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network
WHO Health Emergencies Programme
World Health Organization
Avenue Appia 20
1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland
goarn@who.int

Signatory:  Date: 4 April 2020

Mr Patrick Drury, Manager, GOARN

Important information on Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN) Missions

Thank you for offering your support in response to the GOARN Request for Assistance.

We would like to ensure that you are aware of some of the principles of the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN), including the usual mechanism for deployment of experts to support field responses.

About the Network and GOARN missions

- GOARN is a network of institutions that collaborate to provide rapid assistance at an international level, particularly for outbreak response and emergencies. GOARN strengthens coordination on alert and response to public health emergencies, via the rapid deployment of experts and provision of technical guidance when requested by WHO.
- WHO is a founding partner in GOARN, and provides the secretariat or Operational Support Team (OST).
- The OST supports coordination and communications with partners, and manages the deployment of international teams/experts identified through the Network.
- Currently there are over 220 member institutions in GOARN. Institutions and collaborative entities are eligible to join the Network if they have capacity to support alert and response to public health emergencies, and are not-for-profit. Each partner institution designates one or several focal points through which information is cascaded, including the Requests for Assistance (RFA).
- Experts identified through GOARN partners are deployed to the field following a Request for Assistance issued by the Operational Support Team (OST).
- The duration of a deployment is typically of 4 - 6 weeks. Depending on the event and type of response, longer mission durations are often preferred, and details are provided in the Request for Assistance.

General terms and conditions of the GOARN mission

When deploying with the GOARN mechanism, WHO provides the following:

- The expert to be deployed is issued a standard WHO Short term consultant contract without remuneration. This contract has a nominal value of 1 USD and provides health and security coverage. WHO does not usually provide any remuneration for staff deployed through GOARN.
- Living allowance (per diem) for the specific country of deployment is provided to cover local expenses, including accommodation/hotel, food and local transport.
- WHO covers the cost of air fare in economy class, and fares for other required travel to and from the duty station.
- Experts have to complete necessary steps required for the issuance of the standard WHO Short Term Consultant Contract. This includes a medical check-up by your treating physician. The pre-deployment process is handled by an HR focal point who is assigned by WHO at the time when expert is approved for deployment.
- Basic health insurance is provided as part of the short term consultant contractual agreement with WHO. Further details are provided in the annex at the end of this document.

When deploying with GOARN, it is expected that the home institution provides the following for their staff:

- Continued payment of salary and benefits to the staff member released for deployment.
- Continued health insurance, accident and other coverage accorded to the staff member as part of their contract.
- Agreement that each expert abides by the GOARN Code of Conduct on behalf of the institution (provided as annex).
- Agreement that each expert deployed, works as a member of the WHO team, under the leadership of the Ministry of Health and the supervision of the WHO Representative / team lead.
- Agreement that the expert deployed will complete the mandatory online pre-deployment training in advance of their mission.
- Agreement that experts deployed will submit a final mission report upon their return from the field, and will be permitted to partake in post-mission debriefing and reviews.

Applying for missions

- Follow instructions in the GOARN Request for assistance (RFA) and provide all relevant details to the knowledge platform, including CV, maximum duration of deployment and dates of availability. GOARN Knowledge platform is the only channel to provide offer of support in response to an RFA.
- Offers of support should not be emailed to GOARN OST.
- Only experts affiliated with GOARN partner institutions can be deployed through GOARN.
- Offers of support can be provided by focal points in GOARN partner institutions or experts who are offering their support.
- Ensure CV contains clear information in relation to the criteria in the RFA, including details of what tasks were performed in your history of employment.
- Candidates must make sure that they meet all essential criteria. Candidates not meeting essential criteria (e.g. language skills) should not apply.
- Many factors go into the decision process for deployments. Kindly be patient in awaiting feedback on your offer of support.

Responsibilities during the assignment

Security

Security coverage involves the UN Department of Safety and Security clearing the travel of the expert. Experts deployed through GOARN are thereby accounted for within the UN Security system in the country of arrival, as would be the case for other WHO employees on mission. Deployees must adhere to all UNDSS and WHO security regulations, according to the regulations of the location they are working in. The experts to be deployed are required to complete two online trainings with UNDSS in order to be cleared for travel.

[Basic and Advanced Security in the Field](#)

Representation

During the mission deployees are part of the WHO outbreak response and are representors of WHO / GOARN. Deployees must uphold the GOARN code of conduct at all times and follow the standard working procedures, practices, ethics and regulations of the office you are deployed to, above those of your home organization.

Reporting lines

The primary reporting line for deployees is through the WHO Office in country of assignment.

- **Publications and communications**

All scientific papers, articles, publications or abstracts could only publish after agreement and clearance through established mechanisms, including incident management team in country of assignment, WHO HQ and GOARN OST. It is strongly recommended that any press releases from partner institutions and / or sharing of information on experts' field experience on social media are cleared by WHO prior to posting.

After the mission

End of mission report should be cleared by the Incident Manager (or designate) in the country of your assignment. After the clearance process, please send this mission report to:

- GOARN Operational Support Team (goarn@who.int)
- Incident manager or designate
- Your WHO HR contact person

GOARN mission reports may typically be accessed by MoH, WHO (all levels), and GOARN partners.

We thank you for your interest in working with WHO and GOARN. The OST remains available to answer questions and provide further clarifications.

GOARN Operational Support Team (OST)

Emergency Operations (EMO)
WHO Health Emergencies Programme (WHE)
World Health Organization
Avenue Appia 20
1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland

E-mail: goarn@who.int

Annex: Terms of the WHO Health Insurance coverage for Consultants

Compulsory insurance coverage	Details
<i>Medical expenses for accident or emergency illness*</i>	USD 50,000.- max. per event
<i>Emergency medical evacuation/repatriation**</i>	USD 10,000.- max. (incl. in USD 50,000.- above)
<i>Compensation in case of accidental death</i>	Lump sum = 3 x annual pensionable remuneration P4.step 1 (annual pensionable remuneration P4.step 1 = USD 145,573.- as at 1 Feb 2017)
<i>Compensation in case of permanent (total or partial) disability due to accident or illness</i>	Lump sum = Percentage of 3 x annual pensionable remuneration P4.step 1 according to the degree of disability
<i>War and terrorism risks</i>	Included (nuclear/chemical/biological risks excluded)
<i>Premiums</i>	USD 1.30 per day - paid by Organization

*Emergency illness = A life-threatening situation or situation where the patient must start treatment within 48 hours and for whom travel is not possible for medical reasons.

**Transportation by professional ambulance service to the nearest hospital where treatment can be given or repatriation to home country or medical evacuation to country where care can be given.

Voluntary complementary coverage may be purchased directly from the insurance company, prior to commencement of the contractual period, for the same duration as the compulsory coverage. Voluntary complementary coverage is for the following:

Voluntary Complementary Coverage	Details
<i>Medical expenses for non-emergency illness</i>	USD 50,000.- max.
<i>Compensation in case of death due to illness</i>	Lump sum = 3 x annual pensionable remuneration P4.step 1 (annual pensionable remuneration P4.step 1 = USD 145,573.- as at 1 Feb 2017)
<i>Premiums</i>	USD 3.21 per day - paid by the insured

Detailed information on compulsory coverage and how to purchase voluntary complementary coverage is available on the Cigna website: www.cignahealthbenefits.com. Under 'Plan members' the insured should fill in the standard reference number **378/WHCPVE** and on the next screen fill in the standard date of birth: **DD/MM/YYYY**.

All interactions relating to voluntary complementary insurance shall be between Cigna and the insured, without the involvement of WHO.