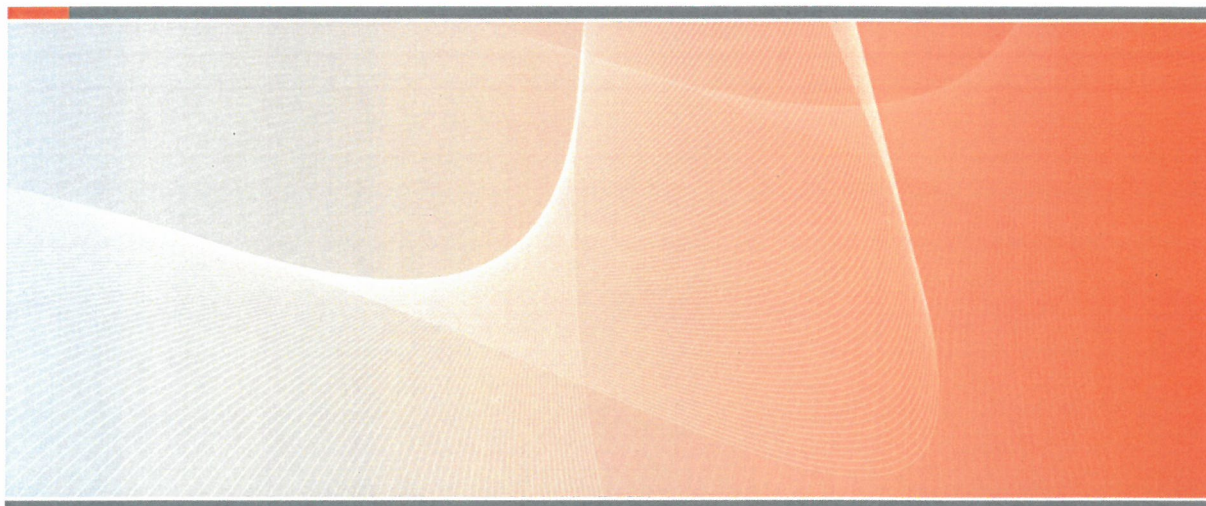




Australian Government
Department of Defence

DEFENCE ASSISTANCE TO THE CIVIL COMMUNITY POLICY



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'DL Johnston'.

DL Johnston, AO
VADM, RAN
Vice Chief of the Defence Force

Department of Defence
CANBERRA ACT 2600

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OFFICIAL

DEFENCE ASSISTANCE TO THE CIVIL COMMUNITY POLICY

Issued by: The Defence Assistance to the Civil Community Policy (this policy) has been issued by the Vice Chief of the Defence Force (VCDF)

Purpose: This policy describes the agreed approach to providing Defence assistance to the civil community (DACC). It covers emergency and non-emergency assistance within Australia and its territories. This policy includes concepts and principles to be applied by Defence personnel to effectively and efficiently manage Defence assistance to the civil community where use of force, or potential use of force (including intrusive or coercive acts), is not involved.

This policy is supported by the [Defence Assistance to the Civil Community Manual](#). The DACC manual provides support for Defence personnel to enable them to meet the intended outcomes of this policy. It should be read in conjunction with this policy document.

Scope and applicability: This policy is an administrative policy framework document. It applies to all Defence personnel.

The terms of a relevant contract may extend the application of this policy to a person/s engaged under a contract.

[Defence Instruction – Administrative policy](#) should be read in conjunction with this policy. In accordance with [Defence Instruction – Administrative policy](#), the Secretary and the Chief of the Defence Force (CDF) require Defence personnel to comply with this policy. Defence personnel who award or manage contracts should consider whether there is a specific and documented reason to include the requirement to comply. If so, include such terms in the contract.

Management: This policy will be reviewed within two years from its date of issue. A review may occur sooner to ensure it continues to meet the intended policy outcome/s.

Availability: The latest version of this policy is only available from [Defence Admin Policy Documents web site](#). Its currency cannot be guaranteed if sourced from other locations.

Policy domain: Military Command Support domain

Accountable officer: Vice Chief of the Defence Force

Policy owner: Head Military Strategic Commitments

Policy contact: Director General Military Strategic Commitments

DEFENCE ASSISTANCE TO THE CIVIL COMMUNITY POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 Defence recognises the importance of supporting the Australian community and the re-assurance Defence Assistance to the Civil Community (DACC) can provide to the people of Australia in times of crisis.

1.2 The Defence Assistance to the Civil Community Policy (this policy) establishes the DACC framework and provides the arrangements by which Defence makes decisions regarding the provision of assistance to the civil community. This policy includes concepts and principles to inform Defence personnel who are making decisions about the provision of DACC. The application of these concepts and principles enables Defence personnel to meet the intended outcomes of this policy. Head Military Strategic Commitments is responsible for ensuring the alignment of DACC policy with Australian Government crisis management arrangements and providing the interface between Defence and whole of government stakeholders. Defence personnel are supported by guidance, information and procedures described in the [DACC Manual](#), managed by Military Strategic Commitments Division.

1.3 Defence provides support to the community under a range of different frameworks. The three main forms of community-requested assistance provided by Defence to civil authorities and organisations within Australia are:

- a. Defence Assistance to the Civil Community (DACC)
- b. Defence Force Aid to the Civil Authority (DFACA); and
- c. Defence Estate Civil Use.

1.4 DFACA is not considered DACC and is addressed in separate policy. [Defence Estate Civil Use Policy](#) provides guidance when DACC provisions can facilitate use of Defence Estate to the community.

1.5 Through the 2020 Defence Strategic Update, Government has directed Defence to enhance its support to civil authorities in response to national and regional crises and natural disasters such as pandemics, bushfires, floods or cyclones. Defence is committed to assisting the civil community in both emergency and non-emergency situations. DACC is a mechanism by which Defence achieves this effect. DACC support is not to involve the use, or potential use, of force (including intrusive or coercive acts) by Defence members.

RATIONALE

1.6 DACC provides a highly responsive and agile policy framework through which Defence can assist other organisations or agencies. This assistance delivers an outcome or effect at a time when the recipient's own resources are unlikely to be sufficient and/or have been overwhelmed. It can also include an activity of significance where there is a mutually beneficial outcome for Defence in providing

assistance. Although states and territories have primary responsibility for domestic disaster response within their jurisdiction, Defence support to civilian agencies in times of major disasters and emergencies has been a consistent policy of Australian Government physical assistance. The DACC arrangements exist to guide decision-makers in the application of Defence resources to provide support outside the core business of military operations to defend Australia and its national interests to advance Australia's security and prosperity.

OUTCOMES

1.7 Defence is to provide the appropriate level of response in both emergency and non-emergency situations based on Australian Government direction, requests for non-financial assistance from state and territory governments, and in accordance with the direction contained within this policy and procedures outlined in the [DACC Manual](#).

1.8 The provision of DACC requires a continuous evaluation of the readiness of the Defence resources necessary to achieve the Australian Government's expected Defence outcomes. Specifically, the CDF Preparedness Directive (CPD) and Defence Requirements Management Module (DRMM) provides the preparedness requirements that will allow Defence to meet the expectations of the Australian Government in times of emergency through the relevant Strategic Tasks.¹

KEY PRINCIPLE ONE – DACC PROVISIONS

1.9 Historically, in times of national crisis or large-scale disaster, Defence has assisted the Australian civilian community when in need, to save human life, alleviate human suffering or prevent loss or damage to property. The diverse demands of the contemporary strategic environment require Defence capabilities, which are able to respond to the Australian Government's requirements, in terms of both defending Australia and meeting domestic essential community support requirements.

1.10 The provision of DACC is based on a number of factors and deliberate consideration is required to ensure Defence resources are used to deliver the core business of Defence. Before DACC is provided, assistance is to be requested, agreed to, and approval notified by Defence² under the relevant process in the [DACC Manual](#). The decision to provide DACC support and commit Defence assets will depend on each circumstance and in full consideration of prevailing operational, fiscal and policy conditions. DACC support is normally short-term in nature, provided on a non-enduring basis and does not grant any rights to the organisation or individual receiving assistance.

¹ The CPD and DRMM reside on the DSN.

² Requests for Australian Government non-financial government assistance, categorised as DACC 2 or 3, is to be formally requested through Emergency Management Australia.

KEY PRINCIPLE TWO – DACC CATEGORISATION

1.11 DACC is divided into two classes, emergency and non-emergency, and comprises ‘six categories’ as follows:

- a. Emergency Assistance³:
 - (1) Category 1 – local emergency assistance (DACC 1)
 - (2) Category 2 – significant crisis response or relief assistance (DACC 2)
 - (3) Category 3 – significant recovery assistance (DACC 3).
- b. Non-emergency Assistance:
 - (1) Category 4 – local non-emergency assistance of a minor nature (DACC 4)
 - (2) Category 5 – significant non-emergency assistance (DACC 5)
 - (3) Category 6 – support to law enforcement (DACC 6).

KEY PRINCIPLE THREE – DACC SUITABILITY

1.12 The following examples of Defence functions are not considered DACC:

- a. Defence assistance to domestic Australian law enforcement agencies where the use, or potential use, of force (including intrusive or coercive acts) is required by Defence members. This is categorised as DFACA and initiated under Part IIIAAA of the *Defence Act 1903*, and is excluded from DACC provisions.
- b. Defence assistance to recognised domestic military ceremonial or military commemorative activities, including ANZAC Day and Australia Day unless the support meets the threshold for a High Profile Public Event.⁴
- c. Defence ceremonial support to Royal and Vice Regal appointments and to local, state, territory and federal governments.
- d. Service Band support unless the support meets the threshold for a High Profile Public Event.
- e. Flypasts and flying displays conducted by Navy, Army and Air Force, unless the support meets the threshold for a High Profile Public Event in which case it is considered DACC.⁵

³ The [Australian Government Crisis Management Framework](#), managed by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, reflects the emergency DACC provisions.

⁴ Defence assistance meeting the threshold for a High Profile Public Event is considered DACC 5.

- f. Defence assistance to media, entertainment or non-news media activities, including print, broadcast and online media; television and radio programs; films; documentaries; commercials; music videos; corporate videos; social media; and books. Requests for support of this nature should be directed to [Defence Media](#)⁶ in Media and Communications Branch for consideration in accordance with the [Media and Communication Policy](#).
- g. Defence assistance to school aged work experience programs. Refer to the Defence [Youth Policy Manual](#).
- h. Defence ship visits to domestic ports and related Sea Day Activities. These are core maritime tasks coordinated by Navy.
- i. Any activities conducted or support provided outside of Australian territory or beyond Australian maritime jurisdiction.
- j. Managing military unexploded ordnance (actioned by Joint Explosive Ordnance Support). See [Defence Unexploded Ordnance Management Policy](#).⁷
- k. Defence-initiated support is not categorised as DACC. This includes activities initiated by Defence Force Recruiting (DFR). Defence-initiated activities are to be funded and managed by relevant Groups and Services.
- l. Circumstances as articulated in [Defence Estate Civil Use Policy](#).⁸
- m. The provision of emergency health care to civilians by Defence health personnel to save life and relieve suffering when civilian health resources are not readily available. Refer to the [Defence Health Manual](#).

⁵ Service aviation displays are conducted in accordance with [SI\(AVN\)OPS 3-104: Flying and Static Displays, AC SI\(OPS\) 03-08 Flypasts and Flying Displays](#) and [SI \(NA\) OPS 03-03 - Flypasts, Flying Displays and Handling Demonstrations - DASR SPA 30](#) for Navy, Army and Air Force respectively.

⁶ media@defence.gov.au.

⁷ <http://intranet.defence.gov.au/home/documents/data/publications/policy-documents/Defence-Unexploded-Ordnance-Management-Policy.pdf>.

⁸ <http://intranet.defence.gov.au/home/documents/data/publications/policy-documents/Defence-Estate-Civil-Use-Policy.pdf>.

KEY PRINCIPLE FOUR – DACC APPROVING AUTHORITIES

1.13 DACC support cannot be undertaken by Defence without correct approvals. The following table details the approving authority for DACC support.

Table–1: Approving authority for DACC support

DACC	Approving Authority^{9,10}
1	SADFO/BM, Unit Commander or designated JTF or DACC Commander
2	CDF or as delegated
3	CDF or as delegated
4	SADFO or Unit Commander depending on type of support requested – where the net additional cost of support does not exceed \$10,000.
5	MINDEF – support requests greater than \$500,000; CDF – support requests \$500,000 or less; VCDF, Head Military Strategic Commitments (HMSC) – multi-Service or Group support \$250,000 or less; Service Chiefs – single Service support \$250,000 or less; Deputy Service Chiefs, First Assistant Secretary Service Delivery (FASSD), First Assistant Secretary Infrastructure (FASI) – support \$100,000 or less; or Directors General Maritime, Land, Air or Estate Service Delivery – single Service or Group \$50,000 or less.
6	MINDEF – support requests greater than \$500,000; CDF – support requests \$500,000 or less; VCDF, Head Military Strategic Commitments (HMSC) – multi-Service or Group support \$250,000 or less; Service Chiefs – single Service support \$250,000 or less; Deputy Service Chiefs, First Assistant Secretary Service Delivery (FASSD), First Assistant Secretary Infrastructure (FASI) – support \$100,000 or less; or Directors General Maritime, Land, Air, or Estate Service Delivery – single Service or Group \$50,000 or less.

1.14 The decision not to charge for DACC assistance ('waive cost recovery') rests with the DACC support Approving Authority as listed at table 1, except:

- a. Cost recovery will not occur for DACC 1, 2 and 4 due to the nature of those tasks.

⁹ Single Service or Group authorities are authorised to commit resources within their remit unless there will be an impact on CPD and DRMM requirements. In these cases, DACC approvals need to be elevated to HMSC for approval coordination.

¹⁰ Approving authorities are limited to approving the use of capabilities and resources held within their responsibilities and delegations.

b. Cost recovery for DACC 3, 5 and 6 support, which exceeds \$500,000, requires Minister for Defence approval, regardless of the initial approval authority.

1.15 Approving authorities are bound to act transparently and take responsible steps to avoid any conflicts of interest. [Defence Instruction Administrative Policy AG 5 – Conflict of interest and declarations of interest](#) refers.

KEY PRINCIPLE FIVE – DACC APPROVAL CONSIDERATIONS

1.16 Activities being considered for Defence support need to complement Defence's values, standards, priorities and goals. DACC Approving Authorities inform their decisions to support or not support DACC requests by considering the following aspects:

- a. Context. The nature and urgency of civilian requests for assistance need to be measured against the ability and capacity of the ADF to respond.
- b. Coordination. Defence will seek to coordinate any response to a state or territory government entity request for assistance as part of a whole of government approach. As such, when the [Australian Government Disaster Response Plan \(COMDISPLAN\)](#) is active, all requests related to that COMDISPLAN are to be coordinated through EMA where practicable.
- c. Classification.
 - (1) The nature of assistance qualifying as DACC, or an alternative type of non-DACC assistance such as ceremonial activities or DFR.
 - (2) Event support is not to be reliant on Defence to be successful and the civilian organisation must be deemed able to manage the event successfully.
 - (3) Non-Defence alternatives. It is the responsibility of the requesting organisation to provide a response and/or resources in the first instance. The availability of other government agencies or commercial alternatives and the implications and perceptions of Defence competing with the private sector (the availability of commercial alternatives should not, by itself, exclude Defence providing the support).
- d. Capacity.
 - (1) The effect on Defence operations, force generation and force preparation commitments and other associated core programs, such as maintenance and supply.
 - (2) The capacity to provide goods and services (diversion of resources) and the potential impacts this could have on Defence meeting its Government directed requirements.
 - (3) The need to support concurrent DACC activities and the prioritisation considerations for each.

- (4) The ability to sustain a DACC activity, and consideration of the need to rotate forces for an extended period.

e. Reputation.

- (1) The reputational benefit to Defence, the ADF or the Service(s) in return for the assistance or the reputational risk if no action is taken or if the support cannot be completed.
- (2) The potential for criticism by other civil entities who might perceive Defence has favoured one entity over another.
- (3) The possibility the provision of DACC may be seen as a substitute for the usual avenues of funding or assistance available to non-profit organisations or government agencies and the provision of support will establish a precedence.
- (4) The request is to complement Defence policies and programs such as, but not limited to: [the Defence White Paper; Pathway to Change: Evolving Defence Culture; the Defence Strategic Update, the Defence Transformation Strategy](#) and [Joint Sec/CDF Directive 2021/02 – Defence Engagement with the Australian Community](#).

f. Return on Investment.

- (1) The assistance raises the awareness and increases community understanding of Defence.
- (2) Assists in meeting the communication priorities/objectives as outlined in [Defence Communication Strategy 2020](#).
- (3) Allows Defence to maximise strategic communications return on investment and consider Defence Force Recruiting priorities and other programs such as the engagement, recruitment and retention of women, people with a disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse background, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

g. Finance.

- (1) The costs incurred for all DACC support will be funded from Service and Group budgets and associated financial risks and liabilities.
- (2) The basis and application of cost recovery including the circumstances in which a cost recovery variation or a cost recovery waiver may apply (reasons for not recovering costs are to be fully articulated in writing as part of the approval process for all DACC categories).

h. Legal.

- (1) The requirement for recipients to provide an indemnity and or hold and maintain insurance to protect the Australian Government against liability for personal injury, death, property loss or damage and or third party claims arising from the execution of the support.

- (2) Prior to execution of DACC support, Joint Operations Support Staff (JOSS) are to ensure a Deed or MOU applicable to the activity is formalised to cover the support being requested.¹¹
- (3) The request/support should be compliant with Australian Government policy, regulations and policy principles.
- (4) DACC provisions can facilitate use of Defence Estate. However, where there is a recurring pattern, or extended period, of requested use of the Defence Estate for non-emergency DACC, a longer-term licence may be appropriate. In these circumstances, requested use should be referred to Estate and Infrastructure Group for consideration.¹²

i. Safety.

- (1) It should be noted the provision of DACC may provide unacceptable risk to the safety of Defence personnel. Consider the time and resources required, in the circumstances, to adequately prepare ADF force elements to accomplish DACC support safely with the lowest risk reasonably practicable.
- (2) *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*¹³ (WHS Act) obligations.

KEY PRINCIPLE SIX – DACC COMMAND AND CONTROL

1.17 CDF will appoint a Joint Task Force (JTF), subordinate Joint Task Group (JTG), or a DACC Commander based on Chief of Joint Operations (CJOPS) recommendations, and should consider the scale, complexity and/or duration of support required, including whether it is in support of a national, multi-jurisdiction or single jurisdiction civil emergency. Where a DACC Commander has not been appointed, the approving authority or delegate will assume the responsibilities in accordance with Table 1.

1.18 All Defence personnel assigned or attached in support of a DACC tasking will remain under the command of the ADF.

1.19 Federal, state and territory civil emergency management authorities are responsible for the management of civil emergencies within their jurisdiction. Any Defence support provided through DACC provisions is to be directed, prioritised and managed by the appropriate civil authority or community organisation. Defence personnel, however, are to remain under the command and control of Defence at all times.

¹¹ Except where provisions in the DACC Manual do not require a Deed or MOU, such as DACC 1.

¹² <http://intranet.defence.gov.au/home/documents/data/publications/policy-documents/Defence-Estate-Civil-Use-Policy.pdf>.

¹³ See Federal Register of Legislation for latest version at www.legislation.gov.au.

1.20 Defence may receive offers of foreign military assistance. Accepting offers of foreign military assistance for DACC is the prerogative of the Australian Government, based on the national interest. Defence will support the Australian Government on military related aspects in their consideration of the offer. Emergency Management Australia is responsible for coordinating support from other international sources, including from overseas civilian agencies or commercial providers.

KEY PRINCIPLE SEVEN – MANAGING RISKS

1.21 The [WHS Act 2011](#) imposes obligations on the Australian Government and on all Officers and Workers of Defence and applies to all DACC activities. In accordance with the [WHS Act 2011](#), the duty of care and due diligence requirements are fundamental for the protection of Defence personnel engaged in the provision of assistance described in this policy. Undertaking all reasonably practicable measures to eliminate, or at least minimise, the risk to the health and safety of Defence personnel and others engaged in DACC support is mandatory. Extant WHS reporting remains mandatory for Defence personnel engaged in DACC activities.

1.22 DACC support should be limited to that which can be accomplished within the standing core qualifications, skills and resources available to ADF elements at the time, which are then augmented by what reasonable additional mission training and resources can be provided within the available period. Except in the most extreme life-threatening situation, where any further delay may lead to loss of life, Defence personnel should be provided task appropriate training and resources required to accomplish the DACC task.

1.23 There are also legal and financial risks associated with the Australian Government providing DACC. Requesting organisations, in appropriate circumstances, are required to provide an indemnity to the Australian Government and to hold appropriate insurance before Defence assistance is provided. There are limited circumstances where a waiver of indemnity and insurance requirements may be appropriate.

KEY PRINCIPLE EIGHT – FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS

1.24 The overall approach to financial and budgetary management within Australian Government departments and agencies reflects the Government's commitment to a more commercial approach through recovery of costs for the provision of Government services.

1.25 All DACC support is to have a cost estimate using the [DFG cost recovery calculator](#). DACC 1 and 2 cost estimates are to be completed as part of the DACC administration requirements and DACC 3, 4, 5 and 6 cost estimates should be completed prior to Defence committing any resources.

1.26 The rationale to recommend a cost waiver must be documented and provided to the Delegate prior to the decision being made and Defence assistance accepted. The [DACC Manual](#) details DACC cost recovery and waiver requirements.

1.27 When community engagement/public relations assets (such as the Roulettes, RAAF Balloon or Team Army Street Machines) are requested to support through DACC provisions, they are not to be included in the DACC cost estimate.¹⁴

KEY PRINCIPLE NINE – HIGH RISK WEATHER SEASON (HRWS) PREPARATIONS

1.28 During times of crisis, unique Defence capabilities may be critical contributors to Australian Government coordinated assistance to states and territories. Defence increases posture to support hazard responses during the annual High Risk Weather Season (01 October – 30 April). Preparations for the HRWS are key to ensuring Defence is suitably postured to support the whole of government response to natural disasters and emergencies

1.29 Consequently, early engagement by states and territories with Defence is crucial to maintaining alignment with the Australian Government Crisis Management Framework and a continuous understanding between key stakeholders on the provisions of DACC. The [DACC Manual](#) provides HRWS preparatory requirements.

KEY PRINCIPLE TEN – IMPLEMENTATION

1.30 All Groups and Services responsible for the management of DACC support are to ensure that all processes and procedures required for the effective implementation of the DACC policy are clearly promulgated appropriately within 12 months of any re-issue of this policy.

DEFINITIONS

1.31 For definitions see the [DACC Manual](#).

¹⁴ This reflects the inherent nature of these assets as increasing the profile and brand recognition of Defence.