



AUSTRALIAN CIVIL-MILITARY CENTRE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

November 2023

Australian Civil-Military Centre Update

Our final newsletter for the year highlights ACMC's diverse range of initiatives in Australia and the Indo-Pacific region. Reflecting on my first 12 months at ACMC, it has been a remarkable year of achievements. I am proud of the contribution we have made to domestic and international civil-military engagement, underpinned by our important relationships across government, civil society and regional partners. I thank everyone for your spirit of collaboration in 2023.

This time of year often brings staff changes. Deputy Executive Director Andy Watts will return to New Zealand in early 2024 and Director International and Domestic Engagement, Deahne Turnbull, will take leave to attend the Defence and Strategic Studies Course next year. I would like to acknowledge Andy and Deahne's wonderful contributions to the work and life at ACMC and wish them well in their future endeavours.

I hope you and your families enjoy a safe and happy festive season and I look forward to working with you in 2024.

Nicola Rosenblum
Executive Director
Australian Civil-Military Centre

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Quad Partnership - HADR in the Indo-Pacific, Brisbane 2023

Protection of Civilians workshop

ACMC convened a workshop to consider the changing context of Protection of Civilians (POC) and identify emerging challenges and avenues to minimise the risk to civilians in crisis.

“Protection of Civilians policy is often confined to military armed conflict and other situations of violence. We need to broaden our thinking to new global challenges such as emerging technologies. Also, with the increased frequency and severity of natural disasters across the world, we are seeing complex, multinational responses involving many different players where protection of civilians should be considered,” ACMC Executive Director, Nicola Rosenblum said.



Nicola Rosenblum, Beth Eggleston, Jules Frost

The two-day workshop in Canberra in September built participants’ awareness of contemporary and emerging issues in POC.

ACMC Executive Director, Nicola Rosenblum, opened the workshop, which featured a range of presentations, including Beth Eggleston (Humanitarian Advisory Group), David Tuck (International Committee of the Red Cross) and Professor David Letts (Australian National University). Case studies centred on the risks of unexploded ordnance to civilian populations, protection of civilians in the maritime environment, climate impacts on civilian populations and the challenges of state and non-state actors conducting disinformation campaigns against civilians during a crisis.

More than 60 representatives attended from Defence, DFAT, NEMA, AFP, the New Zealand Government, ICRC and civil society.

Quad Table Top Exercise

ACMC supported the DFAT-led meeting of the Quad Partnership on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) in the Indo-Pacific in Brisbane in October.

ACMC delivered a tabletop exercise to test draft standard operating procedures for Quad countries to coordinate HADR during crises in the Indo-Pacific. Participants Australia, Japan, India and the United States were tested in scenarios involving disasters impacting partners in the Pacific and South East Asia, to consider how national civilian and military capabilities within the Quad could be coordinated or combined.





Strengthening WPS Civil Society–Government engagement

ACMC supported the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Civil Society–Government Dialogue, in partnership with DFAT and the Australian Civil Society Coalition for WPS. The forum brought together Government agencies implementing Australia’s WPS National Action Plan (NAP) with civil society representatives, to discuss opportunities and challenges in implementing the NAP.

“The Indo-Pacific region faces an increasing number of strategic challenges. The core tenets of WPS are participation, prevention and protection - fundamental elements in fostering stability and security and building community resilience,” ACMC Executive Director Nicola Rosenblum said.

“ACMC plays an important role in WPS. We are committed to facilitating civil society engagement and ensuring there is a diversity of perspectives as Australia’s National Action Plan moves forward.”

The Australian Civil Society Coalition for WPS shared findings from their research

conducted this year, which included input from Indigenous, migrant, refugee and diaspora communities.

Outcomes from the forum will help shape Australia’s ongoing implementation of the WPS NAP.

In line with the NAP, ACMC also promotes the WPS agenda in our capacity building and engagement across the Pacific and South East Asia.

[Viisit ACMC WPS Page](#)



Sandra Creamer, University of Qld, Julie Ballangarry, Griffith University and Justin Mohamed, Ambassador for First Nations People

Enhancing the ADF’s civil-military capacity

ACMC continues to support the development of ADF capacity to engage with external partners during operations.

Across October and November 2023, ACMC staff provided support to the Australian Command and Staff Course (ACSC) with lectures and a panel discussion on civil-military coordination. Presentations challenged students to consider Integrated Planning from the perspectives of civil society and other Australian government agencies. ACMC also contributed to ACSC’s joint exercises and war gaming program.

ACMC staff delivered presentations to 2nd Division’s CIMIC Planning and Operations Course (CPOC) at Randwick Barracks. Discussion focussed on key principles for civil-military-police cooperation and engaging with other government officials and humanitarian actors.





ACMC building inter-agency Liaison Officer capacity

ACMC delivered a pilot inter-agency Liaison Officer course, involving participants from the ADF, NEMA, DFAT, AFP and ABF.

ACMC identified the need for a new inter-agency LO course and developed the curriculum through consultation with a range of Commonwealth agencies. The course covered what different agencies expect from a Liaison Officer and how agencies approach the same issue from different perspectives. A number of the participants presented on different operational planning tools and methodology that participants may encounter.

The pilot course, conducted in early October, will be updated to incorporate participant feedback, with a broader roll out expected in 2024.



Jonathan Ball, ACMC's Foreign Affairs Advisor

ACMC supports AFP pre-deployment course

ACMC delivered civil-military-police training to AFP Officers shortly to commence deployments in the Pacific, Asia, UK and the United States. Briefings aimed to prepare participants for the complexity of a humanitarian crisis overseas.

ACMC provided an overview of civil-military-police cooperation, best practice in crisis preparedness and response, and the roles and mandates of different organisations.

ACMC's presentations at AFP Headquarters in late October also aimed to build awareness of Australia's second National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.



Nicola Scully, ACMC, addressing the AFP Officers



Highlighting ACMC's Pacific engagement at ACFID Conference

ACMC highlighted its commitment to building civil-military coordination capacity across the Pacific region at the annual Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) annual conference in Sydney.

ACMC staff updated delegates on our activities and discussed new ways to work more effectively with non-government organisations and civil society.

“As the frequency and intensity of natural disasters increases across the Pacific, there is a growing requirement for military assistance, both domestic and foreign, to support civilian-led disaster response efforts,” Damian Eaton, ACMC Assistant Director Preparedness told the conference.

This year ACMC has supported disaster preparedness training and exercises in Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste and Tonga. ACMC's role included strengthening local civil-military coordination and engagement with civil society.



Damian Eaton, ACMC, in Tonga engaging with conference delegates



The ACMC Team at the ACFID Conference, Sydney 2023



Jules Frost, ACMC, supported disaster preparedness training and exercises in Fiji

Strengthening South East Asian Civil-Military Coordination

ACMC participated in a major South East Asian exercise that seeks to strengthen cooperation between regional military and civilian humanitarian agencies.

Exercise Coordinated Response was conducted at the Changi Regional HADR Coordination Centre in Singapore in early November. ACMC representatives worked with the Singaporean Armed Forces and National Disaster Management Office, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Refugees, the US Centre for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance and other key regional partners.



Suanu Ikoro, ACMC, Joseph Martin , CFE-DMHA, and Wayne Snell, ACMC

Upcoming events

ACMC will attend the 9th annual meeting of the Regional Consultative Group (RCG) on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia and the Pacific in Dili, Timor-Leste from 4-6 December 2023.

The RCG brings together Asia-Pacific civil, military and humanitarian stakeholders and focuses on enhancing preparedness, coordination and cooperation, especially in countries at a high risk of large-scale disasters.

The conference will include sessions on Technology and Innovation in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) and Climate Change Adaptation and Humanitarian Civil Military Coordination.

ACMC is a member of the RCG co-secretariat, along with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the US Centre for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance.



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