



SENATOR THE HON LINDA REYNOLDS CSC
Minister for Defence
Senator for Western Australia

THE HON GREG HUNT MP
Minister for Health

DEFENCE MEDICAL PERSONNEL TO DEPLOY TO TASMANIA

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) will deploy personnel to Tasmania as part of an Australian Medical Assistance Team-led Commonwealth response, following a request for assistance from the Tasmanian Government.

Around 40 Defence and seven civilian medical professionals will arrive in Burnie by air today, before moving to the North West Regional Hospital as soon as the deep clean has been completed.

Once in location, the personnel will reopen and operate the facility's emergency department, after staff were sent home for two weeks quarantine following an outbreak of COVID-19.

Minister for Defence, Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds CSC said Defence prioritised the request following notification from Emergency Management Australia, as part of the National Coordination Mechanism.

"The temporary closure of the North West Regional Hospital and its emergency department would deprive the community of much needed medical assistance at a crucial time," Minister Reynolds said.

"The deployment of Defence medical practitioners will ensure critical services are maintained."

Minister for Health, Greg Hunt, said the AUSMAT deployment would strengthen North West Tasmania's hospital system during the unprecedented COVID-19 health emergency.

"Team members are highly skilled medical professionals and this rapid deployment is further evidence of Australia's world class health system in action and the scalable nature of the Australian Government's response to COVID-19," Minister Hunt said.

"AUSMAT is one of a few World Health Organization globally-verified Type-2 Emergency Medical Teams in the world."

AUSMAT personnel will provide leadership across clinical, logistic, infection prevention and control, epidemiology and health information, and pre-hospital admission liaison.

ADF medical personnel deploying include general duties medical officers, emergency nurses, a pharmacist, radiographer and an environmental health officer.

Personnel will support the hospital until staff are able to return to work and take over full function of the facility.

Information regarding Defence support to COVID-19 is available at: <https://news.defence.gov.au/national/daily-update-defence-response-covid-19>

Media Note:

Imagery will be available at: <http://images.defence.gov.au/S20201444>

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