Media Release

John Elferink
Minister for Health

**Trauma Centre delivers AusMAT surgical training**

6 August 2015

Surgeons, anaesthetists and peri-operative nurses from around Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific are in Darwin this week for Australian Medical Assistance Team (AusMAT) training with the National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre (NCCTRC).

Thirty clinicians are taking part in the five day AusMAT Surgical Course to prepare them for deployment into a disaster zone.

The Australian Government funded NCCTRC, has been a driver of the development of AusMAT working alongside state and territory counterparts.

“Thanks to the work of the NCCTRC, the Australian Government through AusMAT is able to access the very best in clinical staff from around the nation for health emergencies,” Minister for Health John Elferink said.

“This was well-demonstrated in the deployment to the Philippines in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan, when every state and territory had the opportunity to send clinical staff.”

Operation Philippines Assist in November 2013 was one of the fastest deployments of a field hospital to a sudden onset disaster. The NCCTRC has also diversified beyond sudden onset disasters to include AusMAT infectious disease epidemic response capability.

The NCCTRC’s unique education and training packages focus on simulated environments to complement classroom teaching. To date, AusMAT courses have seen more than 600 doctors, nurses and health logisticians trained to a national standard as medical disaster responders.

This week’s AusMAT Surgical Course has participants from the Northern Territory, NSW, WA, Queensland, Tasmania, Victoria, New Zealand, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and the Cook Islands.

The training includes mass casualty scenario simulation, limb salvage and neurotrauma skills stations.

The NCCTRC was established following the 2002 Bali Bombings by the Howard Government.

The Australian Government recently announced $63.5 million in funding for the NCCTRC until June 2019.
Deployments have included:

- **Operation Pakistan Assist II** – Pakistan Floods August - October 2010. 11375 patients treated during a seven week civil-military deployment

- **Dengue Fever outbreak** – Solomon Islands April - May 2013. Infectious Disease health emergency response to the Solomon Islands

- **Operation Philippines Assist** – Tacloban City November – December 2013. Deployment of the full field hospital in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan, treating 2734 patients

- **Endemic Trachoma** - Maningrida, East Arnhem Land, March 2013. Response to the endemic eye disease trachoma with the Northern Territory Centres for Disease Control

- **Operation Pacific Assist** – Vanuatu March 2015, deployment of rapid assessment, initial treatment and rapid response teams to the Cyclone Pam response, treating 1540 patients

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