

A RIGHT ROYAL VISIT



His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales with the team from the National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre and members of the AUSMAT logistics team from the Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service.

When Clarence House announced the Australian tour for His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales in early March, who would have expected “a non-descript warehouse” in a quiet suburban Darwin street, to be earmarked for a visit.

The National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre’s (NCCTRC) disaster warehouse in an inner city suburb is tucked away in a “shed” and from the outside; you might think there is nothing to see here, however, as Prince Charles quickly discovered, herein is housed an internationally acclaimed asset, and Australia’s excellent emergency medical response capability is impressive.

Established following the Royal Darwin Hospital response to the 2002 Bali bombings, the NCCTRC is funded by the Australian Government to provide the rapidly deployable medical response capability for the Australian Medical Assistance Team (AUSMAT).

Since December 2017, the NCCTRC has coordinated deployments to Bangladesh following the infectious disease diphtheria outbreak related to the Rohingya crisis, deployed a doctor to assess the medical needs in Tonga following Tropical Cyclone Gita and deployed an AUSMAT of 15 personnel to the Southern Highlands of Papua New Guinea in the aftermath of the February 26 earthquake.

During this time, the NCCTRC has also supported locally the recovery of Darwin following the impact of Tropical Cyclone Marcus.

His Royal Highness Prince Charles spent more than an hour on April 10 meeting staff from the NCCTRC and looking at the innovations and unique deployable capability. This included the World Health Organisation accredited Surgical and Anaesthetic capability of the AUSMAT field hospital, medical cache capabilities and the logistics in the field.

Much of the innovation the NCCTRC is becoming globally recognised for is developed by the AUSMAT logistics cell lead by the fire officers from the Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service. Working with a small budget the innovation is critical to self-sufficiency in the field following a disaster.

Logisticians are multi-skilled, innovative and trained to ensure that a field hospital functions and the team is well supported in the field.



Left: HRH The Prince of Wales briefed on AUSMAT by Professor Len Notaras with Dr Brian Spain, Royal Darwin Hospital head of anaesthetics.

Below: Ms Bronte Martin, Nursing Director Trauma and Disaster, discusses the field capabilities of the AUSMAT with HRH The Prince of Wales.



Above: HRH The Prince of Wales meeting Professor Len Notaras AM, Michelle Foster and Health Minister Natasha Fyles. Right: HRH The Prince of Wales informed on patient care by Dr Brian Spain, with Minister Fyles and Senator Nigel Scullion.

