

# Emergency Response - Offshore

## Introduction

University of South Australia staff and students increasingly undertake university activities outside Australia. The safety and welfare of UniSA staff and students travelling offshore is very important. This is particularly the case in situations of

- Serious illness or accident
- Pandemic or civil disturbance
- Natural or unforeseen disaster and
- when travelling to areas subject to travel advisories by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

These protocols detail arrangements in relation to UniSA staff and student safety outside Australia while on University business or exchange. The protocols reflect recent practice and are consistent with the University of South Australia Travel Guidelines and Crisis Management Plan.

## Principles

Principles underpinning the protocols include:

- 1 Unit directors / heads of schools or their nominees will retain
  - emergency (Australian) contact details
  - emergency offshore contact details provided by the traveller
  - copies of travel documents
  - itinerariesfor staff travellers and students travelling for their university studies but not on a formal exchange program
- 2 UniSA International will coordinate efforts to communicate with staff members and students however
  - contact with staff members will normally be made by their supervisor.
  - contact with students travelling for their university studies will normally be made by their academic supervisor.
  - contact with exchange students will normally be made by their UniSA exchange contact.
- 3 Information about individuals and their circumstances will be shared on a need-to-know basis to minimise undue concern amongst colleagues and protect travellers' privacy while responding appropriately to crises.
- 4 Travellers will carry a mobile phone with international roaming to facilitate contact if necessary.

*Please note that as Flightlock is rolled out across the University, responsibility for coordinating efforts to communicate with staff members potentially involved in an offshore incident will be taken up by Human Resources as part of their duty of care role. The protocols will be updated to reflect this transfer of responsibility.*

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### The Protocols

#### 1 Serious illness / accident

The University's insurers provide a worldwide 24 hour emergency contact service which includes facilitating hospital treatment and medical transfer if necessary. It is therefore important that travellers carry the emergency card whilst offshore. The Finance Unit has in place a process for circulating Emergency Numbers cards to travellers.

More minor medical attention can be sought from local doctors through travellers' hotels. The traveller should pay any minor expenses on their UniSA corporate credit card. If necessary, travel insurance claims can be made following the traveller's return to Australia.

#### 2 Pandemic / Civil disturbance

DFAT will advise travellers to return to Australia should a pandemic or civil disturbance appear imminent.

UniSA International (Administrative Officer: International Relations and Market Development) will maintain a review of DFAT advice and inform the Manager International Relations and Market Development of any advice to travellers to return to Australia. The Manager International Relations and Market Development will coordinate contact by supervisors/student exchange contacts with staff members/students affected.

Contact will be made using the emergency offshore contact details provided by the traveller. In the case of staff members, initial contact will be made by mobile phone then through their accommodation.

If there is no response from the traveller the Director UniSA International will be informed and contact will be made with the staff member through the

- Australian contact person and then the
- key international contact (host individual or organisation) provided by the traveller.

UniSA staff and students will be required to return to Australia immediately DFAT make such a recommendation. If necessary, UniSA International will assist with making travel arrangements.

#### 3 Natural or unforeseen disaster

The Manager International Relations and Market Development will coordinate contact by supervisors/student exchange contacts with staff members/students in the affected area using international contact details provided by staff/students.

In the case of staff members, initial contact will be made by mobile phone then through their accommodation.

If there is no response from the traveller the Director UniSA International will be informed and contact will be made with the staff member through the

- Australian contact person and then the
- key international contact (host individual or organisation) provided by the traveller.

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If no contact is made, the situation becomes a matter for the Director UniSA International as Chair of the International Response Team and DFAT will be informed that the University believes that the staff member/student is in the affected area and cannot be contacted.

Once all individuals within the immediate area have been accounted for, The Manager International Relations and Market Development will coordinate contact by travellers' supervisors or student's exchange contact with those in the country and more broadly the region to ensure their safety and ascertain whether they would like to alter their travel plans.

#### **4 Travel to DFAT identified areas**

The Pro Vice Chancellor International and Development will continue to assess individual staff and student applications to travel to destinations which are the subject of a DFAT advisory not to travel or to reconsider the need to travel.

If approval is granted UniSA staff members will be required to

- register with the Australian mission through the DFAT home page
- make daily contact with their manager (by phone, email or SMS) while in-country.

If daily contact is not made within 24 hours of the expected call or message, the staff member's manager will initiate contact with

- staff member via their mobile phone and accommodation.

If there is no response from the traveller the Director UniSA International will be informed and contact will be made with the staff member through the

- Australian contact person
- and then the
- key international contact (host individual or organisation) provided by the traveller.

If no contact is made, the situation becomes a matter for the Director UniSA International as Chair of the International Response Team who will inform the Pro Vice Chancellor International and Development. The Director UniSA International will coordinate

- liaison with the Australian and International contacts
- contact with individuals the staff member might have contacted
- follow up with travel agents
- checks of the traveller's bank account and credit card activity.

DFAT will then be informed that the staff member is missing.

The actions of the Chair of the International Response Team are consistent with advice from DFAT ( [http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/hospitalised\\_or\\_missing.html](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/hospitalised_or_missing.html)).