

# The History of



— 1967-2009 —



## The History of Austcare: 1967 - 2009

### Founded in 1967 to provide a coordinated response to the needs of refugees

The cooperative activities of Australian aid agencies during World Refugee Year from 1959 to 1960 was the catalyst for the establishment of a new funding agency for refugees.

The Australian National Committee for World Refugee Year (WRY) was established in Sydney to coordinate a fundraising campaign in Australia for the United Nations World Refugee Year. The aim was to raise money to help resettle an estimated 15 million refugees from World War II who remained in European refugee camps. Once World Refugee Year was over a group of Christian and Jewish agencies continued its work under the banner of Auscar (Australian Council for Aid to Refugees). Not all groups that worked with refugees were part of Auscar.

The new agency aimed to conduct coordinated appeals on behalf of member organisations, help disseminate information between these organisations and the Australian community in relation to refugees and provide an ongoing coordinated response to the special needs of refugees.

### Austcare – Australians Care for Refugees

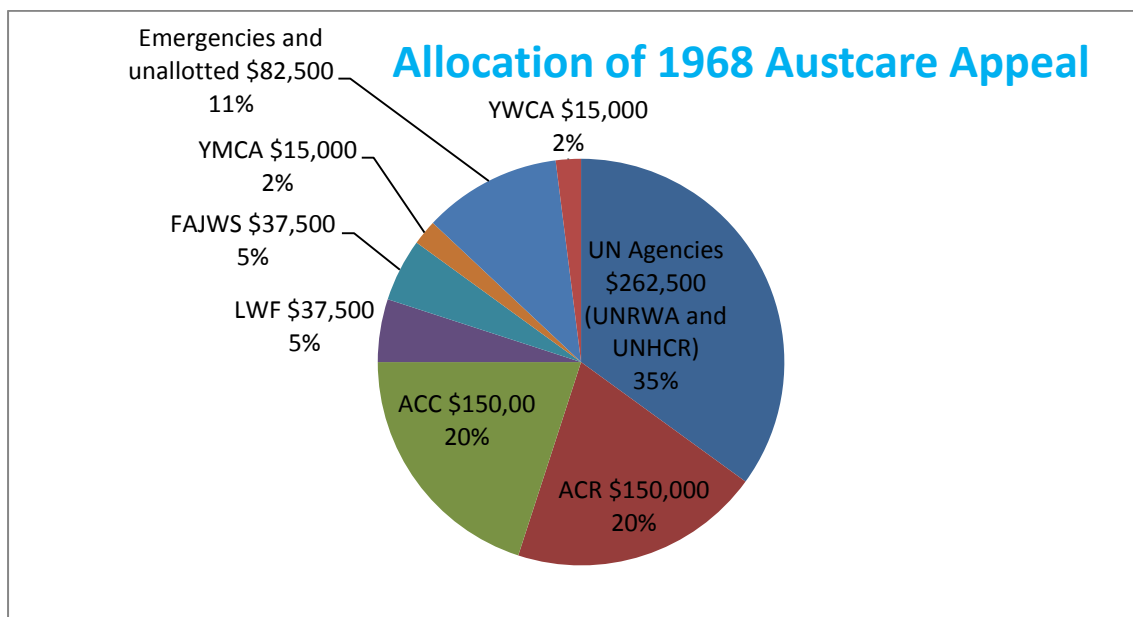
Austcare, a non-government, non-profit organisation was established at a constituting meeting on 31 July 1967. Its membership comprised of the following member agencies:

- Australian Council of Churches (represented by Mr V Hinton)
- Australian Catholic Relief (represented by Mr R Maher)
- Young Women's Christian Association of Australia (represented by Mrs J Stafford)
- Federation of Australian Jewish Welfare Societies (represented by The Hon S D Einfeld)
- Lutheran World Federation (represented by Mr S K Bartsch)
- Young Men's Christian Association of Australia (represented by Mr R Kidson)

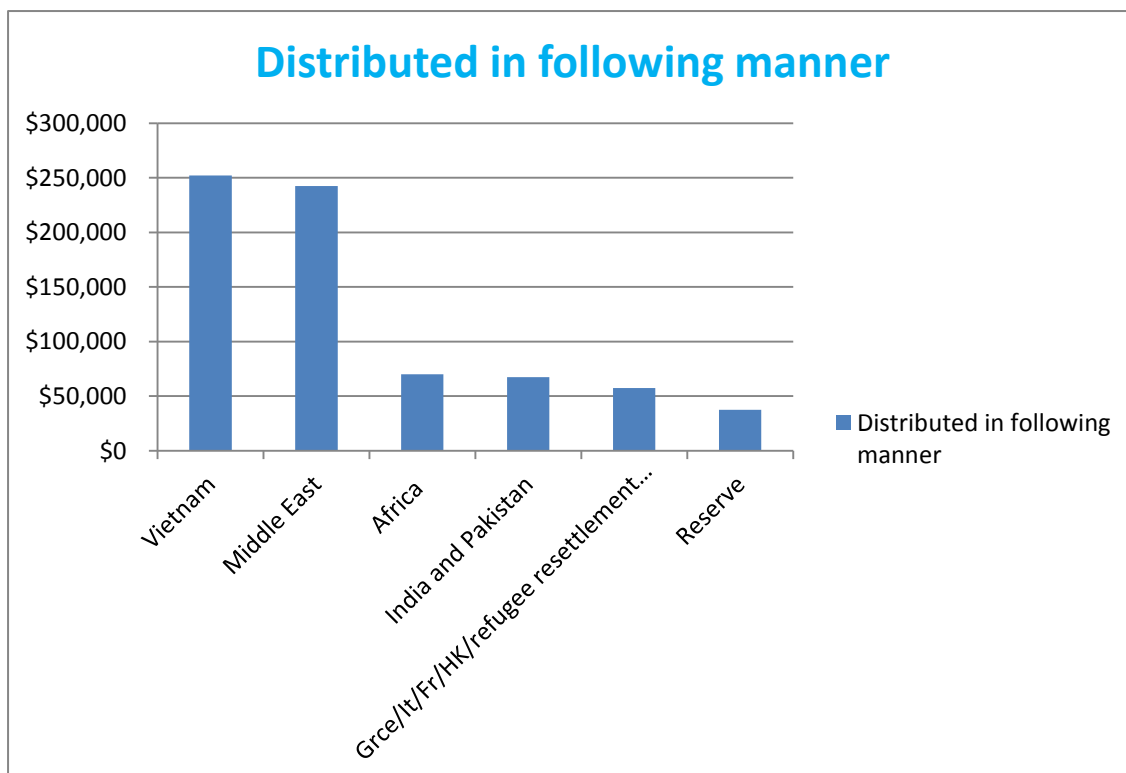
Other national organisations which were involved in raising money for refugees were welcome to become members. Not all organisations which were part of Auscar automatically joined Austcare.

A number of religious organisations were among the original members of Austcare. This enabled them to raise money through local congregations. In 1968 the Australian Council of Churches (ACC) voted at its conference to have an immediate appeal from within its own congregations, to raise funds and voluntary workers for the Austcare Appeal. This vote was the result of an urgent appeal from voluntary organisations in South Vietnam asking for immediate funds to help them deal with the growing numbers of refugees caused by the ongoing conflict. The decision by the ACC meant that two archbishops, Archbishop Woods of Melbourne and Archbishop Appleby of Perth became the chairmen of their respective State Appeal Committees.

A target figure of \$750,000 was set for the 1968 Austcare Appeal and it was decided to allot the money in the following manner:



As more information became available on the type of projects and the sort of funding that was needed the money was eventually distributed through the member agencies in the following manner:



By 1970 twelve organisations were receiving funding from Austcare. These were: Australian Baptist World Aid and Relief Committee, Australian Council of Churches, Australian Catholic Relief, Australian Jewish Welfare Societies, Australian National Committee UNICEF, Lutheran World Federation, Quaker Service Council of Australia, Save the Children Fund, Theosophical Order of Service, United Nations Association of Australia, Young Men's Christian Association, Young Women's Christian Association. Many of the organisations worked in the same countries through their agencies on the ground. For instance \$192,000 was allocated to Nigeria/Biafra and the money was divided along these lines: ACR \$50,000; ACC \$50,000; UNICEF \$50,000; YMCA \$10,000 and YWCA \$7,500.

## State Committees

In July 1968 it was decided to establish State committees of Austcare. The nucleus of these committees was made up of member-agency representatives and a select number of influential citizens. Patronage from the State Governor, Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, the Anglican Archbishop and the Catholic Archbishop was sought for each State.

### Examples of State Committees' work in 1971

**Tasmania** – There was one office shared by three organisations: United Nations Association (Tasmanian Division), Freedom from Hunger and Austcare. This State undertook one Door Knock appeal. The office and the Door Knock appeal were funded by Austcare and the money was divided between the three organisations, however on occasion, as with the money from the Special Appeal for the East Pakistan refugees living in India the money came to Austcare.

**South Australia** – There was one office with combined staff funded by Austcare for Austcare and Freedom from Hunger. This office undertook two Door Knocks, one in May for Austcare, one in October for Freedom from Hunger, both funded by Austcare. Money from the East Pakistan Refugees in India appeal went to Austcare.

**Western Australia** – The West Australian office was funded by Freedom from Hunger. A mail appeal for both organisations was held in May and a Door Knock appeal for both organisations was held in October.

## Fundraising

In 1968 Australia's population numbered 12 million and there was a small pool of people to fundraise from. These people were often connected to similar organisations and institutions. When discussion occurred over the format of the Austcare Bulletin, mention was made that it should be printed in sufficient quantities for 'distribution to the clergy, schools, church youth groups and other potential supporters of future Austcare programs'.

There was a constant tension between the priorities of member organisations and Austcare with relation to fundraising. Even when member organisations organised appeals on behalf of Austcare, as the ACC had done with its Emergency Appeal for Vietnam in 1968 there was concern that this would affect the ability of Austcare to raise funds.

Ongoing tensions about fundraising were apparent in 1968 when concerns were raised about another appeal, this time for Biafra (The Biafran War in Nigeria, from 1966-70 saw the displacement of tens of thousands of refugees) so soon after Austcare's May Appeal.

In April 1968 in response to concerns about fundraising it was resolved that a meeting should take place between Freedom from Hunger, Australian Red Cross Society, Community Aid Abroad and Austcare to 'discuss and agree upon the rationalisation of national public appeal activities for overseas aid'.

Permission was needed from Local Government Areas for fundraising. Local government policy at the time only allowed one Door Knock Appeal a month. Where permission was refused for the Door Knock Appeal, envelope collection centres were set up as was done on each street in Broken Hill in 1969.

Austcare's President Major General Cullen concluded in the 1971 Annual Report that raising funds for refugees did not get easier, with so many organisations adopting the Door Knocks and Councils becoming more resistant, however another satisfactory method to raise money had not been found.

## Structure

### Fundraising committees were formed by every State.

In 1969 NSW had 150 committees. In 1970 there were 171 committees. There were three country directors and two regional directors in NSW. Applications to undertake the Appeal were sent out to 226 municipalities in 1970, affirmative responses were received from 150, while 33 negative responses were received.

In 1970 concern was still being raised about the fragmentation caused by member bodies of Austcare launching their own appeals. The executive officers of Austcare were asked to prepare a statement or a resolution that looked at the role of Austcare in relation to all emergency situations. Member bodies and State Committees were also asked to look at whether Austcare should act on behalf of victims of local and national disasters.

Eventually it was decided that Austcare's role related to refugees and not to disaster relief in Australia.

## Direct Mail

For the May 1969 Appeal, three million reply paid envelopes were printed and forwarded to all states. An organisation named: Economic Sampling Services distributed these envelopes and PMG Services distributed them in country areas. This cost \$17 per 1,000 envelopes and envelopes cost \$7 per thousand to produce. The total cost of production and distribution of envelopes in Queensland, NSW, Victoria and SA was \$63,500

Around 200 groups were active in NSW on appeals day, however, Paul Lavelle, the Appeal Director for 1969 pointed out that member churches were a problem and would still need a lot of patient explanation and education in order to get them more involved in working for the Appeal. There were other teething problems including limited number of Door Knock hits and receipt books.

## Joint fundraising Austcare and Freedom from Hunger Campaign

Negotiations between Austcare and Freedom for Hunger Campaign (FFHC) to use the same fundraising staff were continuing. This had not been possible in 1969 but it was hoped that it would occur in 1970. FFHC and Austcare had organised combined appeals in Tasmania and Western Australia in September 1969. The expenses and funds were to be shared equally. In 1971 an Austcare/Freedom from Hunger National Management Committee was formed. In 1972 a joint Austcare/Freedom from Hunger National Management Committee was set up.

In March 1973, a symposium was held by Austcare and the Freedom from Hunger Campaign from all states to discuss the possible amalgamation or closer cooperation between Austcare and FFHC. The reason behind the amalgamation would be threefold: 1) to present a clearer view to the Australian public about overseas aid to refugees, 2) to promote world development and 3) to minimise the cost of annual appeals. The meeting resulted in the establishment of a working committee 'to formulate a detailed plan for administrative cooperation at the National level'.

Queensland was asked to look at the sharing of resources and greater cooperation because the cost of appeals in Queensland was 50% of the amount raised which was considered 'unacceptable, dangerous and contrary to the general good of our cause'. New South Wales and Victoria would continue to operate separately but would explore 'greater avenues of cooperation'.

## Relationship with ACFOA

In 1968 Austcare decided to join the Australian Council for Overseas Aid (ACFOA), the umbrella organisation for aid organisations in Australia. The cost of membership was \$400. It also decided to take part in ACFOA's Refugee and Migrant Service Committee. In 1969, Austcare's President Major General Cullen was appointed Chair of the Refugee and Migrant Service Committee. In 1971, Major General Paul Cullen was elected Chairman of ACFOA.

## Austcare Bulletin

By 1970 it was decided that membership would be given to anyone who applied for it and anyone who donated \$2 was sent a copy of the Austcare Bulletin. By 1971, the Austcare Bulletin was registered as a periodical that could be sent by post to its members, who by this stage numbered 3,000. Another 35,000 were sent to people who paid \$2 or more. The Bulletin cost 5c and was sent out quarterly.

## Relationship with United Nations and Education

The United Nations Association of Australia decided in January 1968 that while it would maintain its membership in Austcare for the remainder of 1968 it was opposed to the establishment of permanent State committees of Austcare. At the same time Dr. V.A. Beermann a UN Observer who had attended Austcare meetings since September 1967, left to take up a new position with UNICEF in New York and noted that: 'the successful establishment of Austcare as an Australian national refugee-relief and rehabilitation body was the most significant event during his service in Australia'.

The education of the public about overseas aid was also an ongoing issue. By 1971 the President of Austcare, Major General Paul Cullen had a long-term plan which included working in conjunction with Freedom From Hunger Campaign and UNICEF under the auspices of the United Nations Association of Australia to form United Nations clubs in every one of the 10,000 secondary schools in Australia. The UNAA had managed to have information about the United Nations issues introduced into the social studies curricula and this was beneficial to Austcare, Freedom from Hunger and UNICEF.

Austcare gave financial assistance to the UN for its magazine *Kuruna* which was distributed to high school students. In 1971 Austcare gave \$1,000 to underwrite the first issue of *Kuruna* which was published in July 1971. Two issues were printed a year, with a newsletter sent to schools between issues. By December 1971 Austcare had decided to fund *Kuruna* to the amount of \$3,000 a year. At the end of 1971 a special appeal had been undertaken for East Pakistan Refugees in India. When reviewing the number of organisations and individuals who had donated more than \$100 it was realised that a very large response had come from schools, and this was attributed to the distribution of the UNAA's newspaper, *Kuruna*.

In 1971 Austcare agreed to represent the UNHCR in Australia in matters of fundraising, information and education. At the same time it agreed to provide financial support for UNHCR projects in countries of first asylum. This was more a clarification of Austcare's relationship with the UNHCR rather than a movement in a new direction.

### Early years: Strong support from newspapers

There was a different relationship between the media and aid organisations in those early years. Mention is made, in 1969, of the 'secondment' of Mr Graham Williams from *The Australian* to Austcare for six weeks. Mr Williams visited Jordan, Nigeria/Biafra, Cotonou in Dahomey (where Red Cross flights left for Biafra) and Geneva and sent despatches back to Sydney to be used in other papers as well as *The Australian*. Facilities at *The Australian* were available for telexing information and copying photographs. Mr Williams spoke to the High Commissioner for Refugees, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan in Geneva who sent a letter to Austcare which was to be released on the eve of the campaign. It was distributed to the National press including *The Australian*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Daily Telegraph* and the *Melbourne Herald*. *The Sydney Morning Herald* ran this letter on their 'Letters to the Editor' page, which as the report prepared by Mrs Patricia Bennett, the Press and Publicity Officer for the 1969 Appeal, pointed out was 'a most unusual break with their tradition'.

On his return to Australia, Mr Williams worked in the Austcare offices for the remaining two weeks of the campaign. *The Australian* ran front page and inside stories every two days till the date of the Door Knock on 25 May.


In Victoria the *Sun Herald* newspaper chain nominated Miss B. Dawson to write regular articles on the campaign. Media around the country published and broadcast material provided by Austcare.

Press clippings from that period fill two 4"x14" special folders of 100 pages each. The free advertising was valued at approximately \$250,000, if not more. Ms Bennett was the driving force behind this publicity campaign.

Ms Bennett concluded that as a result of the publicity campaign surrounding the Appeal, Austcare's identity was firmly established in the public's mind. She pointed out that it was imperative that this continue to maintain the high response rate from the public.

### First Austcare letterhead

The letterhead was redesigned to emphasise the word Austcare, while listing the names of the organisation's constituents.



**1969 letterhead**

Patron-in-Chief:  
His Excellency, Sir Roden Cutler,  
V.C., K.C.M.G., C.B.E.,  
Governor of New South Wales.

Patrons:  
The Hon. R. W. Askin, M.L.A.,  
Premier of N.S.W.

The Hon. C. B. Cutler, E.D.,  
Deputy Premier of N.S.W. and  
Minister for Education  
and Science.

The Hon. P. D. Hills, M.L.A.,  
Leader of the Opposition.

His Eminence, Cardinal  
Sir Norman T. Gilroy,  
Archbishop of Sydney.

His Grace, The Most Rev.  
Marcus L. Loane, M.A., DD.,  
Archbishop of Sydney.


Chairman: Mr. Alex Jamieson.  
Deputy Chairman:  
Mr. Harry Goldstein.  
Director: Mr. Paul Lavelle.  
Secretary: Rev. G. S. Parish.  
Treasurer: Mr. Don Telfer.

**AUSTRALIANS CARE FOR REFUGEES**

APPEAL HEADQUARTERS: 13 PHILLIP STREET, SYDNEY 2000.

TELEPHONE: 27 4786, 4 lines.  
Cable: "Austcares", Sydney.

**MEMBER BODIES:**  
Australian Catholic Relief • Australian Council of Churches • Australian Medical Association • Australian National  
Committee for UNICEF • Baptist Union of Australia • World Relief Committee • Federation of Australian Jewish  
Welfare Societies • International Social Service • Lutheran World Federation • Save the Children Fund •  
Society of Friends (Quakers) Theosophical Order of Service • United Nations Association of Australia • Young Men's  
Christian Association • Young Women's Christian Association.



**AUSTCARE**

**AUSTRALIANS CARE FOR REFUGEES**

**1970 letterhead**

UNITING THE FOLLOWING NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS CARING FOR REFUGEES.  
AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC RELIEF • AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES • AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION • AUSTRALIAN  
NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR UNICEF • BAPTIST UNION OF AUSTRALIA • WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE • FEDERATION OF  
AUSTRALIAN JEWISH WELFARE SOCIETIES • INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE • LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION • SAVE THE  
CHILDREN FUND • SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS) • THEOSOPIICAL ORDER OF SERVICE • UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION  
OF AUSTRALIA • YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION • YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

There had been some discussion about changing Austcare's name to better reflect its mission, but a decision was made in September 1971 to keep the name, Austcare, because Austcare was seen as a well-established organisation. At the same time it was decided that the words: 'Australians Care for Refugees' would be added to the letterhead.

## 1970s

Income was divided among the UNHCR, Australian Catholic Relief (ACR) and the Australian Council of Churches; smaller amounts went to Save the Children Fund, the YMCA, the YWCA, International Social Service, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (Palestinian refugees), Australian Baptist World Relief and the Jewish Welfare Society. The bigger organisations, UNHCR, ACR and the Australian Council of Churches each received 20 per cent of the funding, while the smaller agencies like the YWCA each received approximately 2.5 per cent of the funds to a total of 100 per cent.

Funds were mainly raised through Door Knocks. In the 1970s, according to Rev. John Mavor, a former Board member and President of Austcare, there were not that many organisations working in the area of aid and development in Australia, and as a result each organisation had a set time for major fundraising. Australian Catholic Relief had its Lent Appeal, World Christian Action focused on Christmas with its Christmas Bowl, Austcare's door knock program took place in May and the Freedom From Hunger Campaign (FFHC) had its appeal in September.

In time Austcare and its member agencies found that in order to keep costs down and in order to retain staff, fundraising had to be carried out throughout the year. Another change was the increased number of agencies working in the area of aid and development, for example, World Vision, Care, Compassion. All these changes impacted on Austcare's profile and ability to raise funds.

Over time, as Rev. Mavor explains in his book, *Come On! Come On!*, it became obvious that while Austcare continued to raise money for other agencies to spend, it would have no identity with the recipients or with donors. Consequently, Austcare eventually implemented its own programs which were often in partnership with other organisations.

## 1980s

During the 1980s Austcare moved away from Door Knocks and towards direct mail appeals under the leadership of then National Director Carole Devine. Austcare moved from a federation of state committees and an amalgamation of member organisations to a national management structure. This move was made to reduce administrative costs and to centralise and implement organisational policies.

By 1981 Austcare was providing money for projects in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, South America and Europe. The projects focused on the ongoing needs of both internally displaced people and refugees. These projects included counselling services, resettlement services, family reunification, repatriation, health care and social welfare programs.

In 1983 Austcare still had its original 14 member agencies and had formed close relationships with other organisations involved in refugee assistance. Between 1968 and

1983 Austcare had distributed over \$12 million to member agencies. In 1983 it distributed just over \$1 million.

A review undertaken in 1983 on Austcare's role focused on the need for Austcare to become more project-oriented and manage its own projects. According to the President of Austcare, Major General Paul A. Cullen, research showed that the public would 'only fully support appeals by an agency that is 'doing some good **itself**'. He added that unless Austcare initiated, controlled, and operated certain of its own projects the Australian Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB - the Australian government's foreign aid program and the forerunner to AusAID) and CDC (AIDAB's [Australian International Development Assistance Bureau] Committee for Development Cooperation) would not provide grants or subsidies.

Initially all Austcare projects were funded through Austcare's member organisations and their overseas affiliates. By 1986 policy changes saw Austcare retain close links with its member agencies but it no longer funded projects exclusively through them. After 1986 Austcare went outside its membership structure to assist those in need. This move helped it respond appropriately and provided opportunities for genuine local self-determination. Rev John Mavor wrote that this move gave Austcare a greater sense of identity and a life of its own.

### Refugee Council of Australia

Moves were underway in 1983 for the Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) to undertake some of the work being done by the Migrant Welfare subcommittee of Austcare. Austcare had helped launch the Refugee Council of Australia in 1981 and was providing financial assistance on the proviso that the RCOA did not undertake its own public fundraising. This was in order to ensure that yet another organisation did not appeal for the same dwindling refugee dollar. The RCOA included organisations that were not members of Austcare and aimed to play an advocacy role for refugees with the government, the media and the Australian people. By 1986 the RCOA was carrying out much of the advocacy work that Austcare had previously carried out on behalf of refugees. In 1986 Austcare was still providing 90 per cent of the RCOA's annual budget. Over time Austcare's decreasing ability to provide funds and the RCOA's increasing need to raise funds led to the RCOA raising its own funds.

As Rev Mavor explained, Austcare had seen itself as a fundraising body and not an advocacy body. While acknowledging the need for advocacy on behalf of refugees it also found carrying out both roles difficult, hence the birth of the RCOA. Initially, Major General Paul Cullen, President of Austcare, was also the President of the RCOA and Barbara Young who was on Austcare's Board was its representative on the Refugee Council. Over time this cross-representation dwindled.



Fundraising/Information

## Refugee Week

**In 1986 Austcare launched Refugee Week** which included Refugee Day (June 20). It was a Sydney event with a small street parade of refugee communities. By 1987 Austcare's President, Major General Paul Cullen was hoping that it might become a worldwide event. It became a national event in 1988. By 1990 it was a well-publicised part of Australian life with guest speakers travelling the country speaking about the refugee experience, schools taking part in refugee events, plays about the refugee experience and other refugee-related activities around the country. Eventually Austcare's funding of Refugee Week ceased as it was decided that in a time of financial stress Austcare was not receiving the return it could get through other means. Rev John Mavor said that some people believed that Austcare's profile could be raised with less outlay, however Austcare received radio and television coverage during the week that was not possible at any other time. The Refugee Advice and Casework Service was launched in 1988. This service provided free and professional advice on applications for refugee status or for residence based on strong humanitarian grounds. This service still exists and provides a free expert legal service for people seeking asylum in Australia.

## 1990s

In 1990 Rev Mavor became President of Austcare when Major General Paul Cullen resigned after 23 years on the Board as Chair and President. Rev Mavor had been on the Austcare board since 1974 and had become Chair when Bob Fairley resigned in 1977 (the roles of Chairs and Presidents had been separated since 1971).

By the 1990s Austcare had 17 member organisations. Austcare was the overarching Australian agency that provided emergency relief and development assistance to refugees around the world. Austcare also represented the United Nations High Commission for Refugees on matters of fundraising, education and public information in Australia. Project partners would submit projects to Austcare for funding, the money raised by Austcare was sent directly to its project partners who then sent it to their field representatives. Money was not sent to foreign governments and money was not sent via government to government channels, meaning that Austcare money went directly to the refugees. By this stage Austcare had 23 employees nationwide.

The number of operating partners increased, which allowed Austcare to identify its priorities. According to Rev Mavor, instead of Austcare working to a pre-determined formula, the needs expressed by partner organisations determined Austcare's priorities. It also meant that Austcare had a greater ability to respond to emergency needs and was also able to help the Australian Government direct government aid to a particular need. In 1988 Austcare monitored the work of its project partners and concluded the money was being spent efficiently.

### **Health Centre at Deir El Balahi – Austcare's longest continuously supported project**

By **1989** Austcare's longest continuously supported project was the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) Health Centre at Deir El Balah in the Gaza Strip, which it had supported for 20 years. The UNRWA provided assistance, protection and advocacy for the estimated 4.8 million registered refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the occupied Palestinian territories. Deir El Balah was the smallest refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. This health centre was constructed in 1959 and by 1970 it had a general outpatient centre, a maternal out-patient facility, a child welfare out-patient facility and a maternity ward of six beds. There was one medical officer, one staff nurse, four practical nurses and two midwives. In 1970 the cost of running the centre was \$19,196 of which Austcare provided \$5,000. It served the 7,000 refugees in the camp and a further 10,000 people who lived in the area. In 1968 there were 156,000 visits to the centre. In 2006 there were 19,534 registered refugees at Deir El Balah and 39 health workers on the morning shift seeing approximately 9,500 people each month. The other projects that Austcare was involved with through UNRWA were scholarships for young refugees at UNRWA's Kalandia Vocational Training Centre in the West Bank, funding a portion of the operating costs for the Jalazone Health Centre in the West Bank and the operating costs for Rehydration/Nutrition Centres in Lebanon and Syria.

Austcare's ecumenical nature was underlined by its work with UNRWA whilst one of its original member organisations was the Federation of Australian Jewish Welfare Societies (AJWS). In 1970 AJWS helped young migrants in Israel, particularly those from Arab countries to integrate into the community. \$25,000 was allocated for this project and \$12,500 was allocated to the support of 55,000 refugees who had fled to Europe after the Six Day War. The refugees had no access to employment so \$25 was allocated to each refugee each week.

### **Funding in the 1990s**

The Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB) was the precursor of AusAID and the Australian Government agency responsible for the allocation of funds for overseas development assistance. Over the years Austcare became known for its ability to deliver aid, and particularly development aid. Under then National Director Eric Ellem's leadership the relationship with AIDAB developed and 1990 saw AIDAB give two million dollars in grants to Austcare, \$600,000 more than received in 1989.

By 1991 although the amount of money being distributed by Austcare as a result of grants and appeals for nominated projects had increased it was finding it difficult to raise money from the public.

1994 saw a number of changes including the UNHCR beginning to develop its own fundraising capabilities in Australia. The UNHCR felt that it would be able to raise more money under its own imprimatur than through Austcare.

In 1998 Austcare became an operational agency. Austcare also underwent an extensive re-branding campaign, the Austcare logo was updated and its image was corporatised.

In 1999 Rev Mavor resigned from his role as President and The Hon Ian Sinclair AC, former leader of the National Party and former speaker of the Federal House of Representatives became President. In the 1999/2000 annual report, Austcare's new President Ian Sinclair said that this meant an agency that listens, involves and assists the people with whom it works on the ground. It also wanted to have a greater impact on improving governance and human security through pro-poor programs at the grassroots level. The Chair of Austcare, Barbara Young, pointed out the even greater competition for the charitable dollar, reflecting on the number of aid and development agencies and other charities in Australia competing for that dollar and the increasing number of refugees worldwide. By 1997 there were an estimated 27 million refugees in the world.

## 2000s

### Establishment of country offices

Country offices were established under Chief Executive Officer Michael Smith AO. In 2001 Austcare established an office in **Cambodia** to trial the implementation of its programs directly with local partners. This proved successful and led to the establishment of Austcare offices in **East Timor** and **Indonesia**.



Austcare staff Cambodia



Aceh Office Opening - May 2008

AusAID increased its grants to Austcare in 2001. AusAID grants totalled \$1,955,017 which led to an increase in the disbursement of funds to overseas projects.

In 2002, Austcare's total revenue decreased by 11% to \$4,463,595 as a result of a decrease of \$702,663 in AusAID funding.

As Austcare's operations were expanding overseas, the Austcare Board decided to **close the State Offices** in **2003** to reduce costs. Having overseas operations resulted in funding from new donors in East Timor and Cambodia where Austcare intended to strengthen ties

with its local partners, Halare in East Timor and Teuk Saat in Cambodia. An East Timorese NGO Halare undertook community development and sustainable farming programs. Austcare in conjunction with Halare helped establish community based organisations that could undertake their own development programs. By 2003 there were 14 of these organisations involving 788 people and another 14 were expected to be established by the end of 2003. Austcare continued its work in Africa and as it was the area of the world with the least amount of Australian Government funding Austcare sought to diversify its funding sources.

Once Austcare had closed its State Offices it needed to look elsewhere for partners to help undertake its **community education** program. It started to work with academic institutions on research initiatives and it also worked on building better relationships with the media, and partnerships with the corporate, cultural and community sector organisations. In order to increase its fundraising, Austcare concentrated on its bequest program and on building stronger corporate partnerships.

Austcare also found that it needed to strengthen its relations with the Australian community, raise more money and diversify its funding base. One of the new fundraising events in 2003 was **Food for Thought**. It was hoped that during Refugee Week, 10,000 Australians would organise an event based around food, barbecues, morning teas, picnics, etc. where everyone attending would donate money.

2005 and 2006 saw Austcare continue to devolve responsibility to country offices and at the same time increase and diversify its funding base. It was also the first time that bequest funds were the single greatest contributor toward its general funds. The logo was changed from two hands around a person inside a map of Australia with Austcare – Australians Caring for Refugees written at the bottom to two figures in stylised oval with Austcare World Humanitarian Aid.

### **Boxing Day Tsunami 2004**

The 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami saw Austcare receive \$1,484,000 from the Australian public and the business community. This enabled Austcare to commit 20 per cent of the funds directly to emergency relief and 80 per cent to long term recovery and rehabilitation. This amount of money enabled work in both Sri Lanka and Banda Aceh.

The **Protection Program** was established by CEO Michael Smith in **2005** to support protection interventions for people affected by conflict and disaster. The program aimed to preserve and improve the safety and dignity of civilians at risk of serious harm in accordance with the relevant international law.

The protection program's major activities between 2005 and 2009 were:

1. The development and utilisation of a Rapid Response Register (RRR) of protection officers for deployment through Stand-by Partner arrangements with UNHCR, UNICEF and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA). Austcare's protection officers were deployed to UN agencies during emergencies in Sudan, Timor-Leste, Nepal and Sri Lanka. The officers monitored and reported human rights violations, organised the safe and dignified return of refugees and established community-based child

protection units. This program was funded by the Australian government until late 2008.

2. The development, field testing and publication of *Safety with Dignity*, a field manual for the integration of community-based protection across humanitarian programs;
3. In 2009 the appointment of a Global Protection Advisor to enhance protection understanding and programming within the ActionAid network;
4. An engagement in research focused on protracted displacement in the Asia Pacific region. From March 2006 – December 2009, Austcare, Griffith University and the Australian National University obtained an Australia Research Council Grant to conduct research on protracted refugee and internally displaced persons (IDPs) situation in the Asia-Pacific. This piece of research “A Place to Call Home” looked into protection challenges and responses to the vulnerabilities of refugees and IDPs in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Initial findings helped Austcare to develop new programs that responded to the needs of Burmese refugee communities in Bangladesh and Thailand. A book and two briefing papers were produced at the end of the research:
  - *Protracted Conflict: Protection Challenges for Humanitarian Agencies*, June 2008 - Briefing Paper, Sri Lanka: challenges of providing humanitarian assistance to internally displaced people within a highly politicised and difficult environment in which there are traumatised and divided communities.
  - *Bhutanese Refugees in Nepal: Anticipating the Impact of Resettlement*, June 2008 - Briefing Paper, Refugees in Nepal: the positive and negative aspects that resettling Bhutanese refugees who lived in Nepal for 18 years had on refugee camp populations including camp residents, political leaders and host communities.

In addition, the Protection Program engaged at the international level, particularly within international fora including: the annual UNHCR Executive Committee meetings; UNOCHA’s protection standby capacity (PROCAP) and the Global Protection Cluster Working Group.

Following Austcare’s association, and subsequent affiliation with the ActionAid International federation in June 2009, the outreach of the program was extended. Since that time the protection program has aimed to complement the work of ActionAid’s International Emergency and Conflict Team.

By **2006/07** Austcare had 70 overseas staff with four country/regional offices and a representative in Geneva. This was also the year that saw Austcare implement its largest single project “**Neighbourhood Corners**”, in the occupied Palestinian Territories. This project of \$3 million was funded by the Australian Agency for Development (AusAID). AusAID only works with NGOs that have strong community support and the professional capacity to deliver aid overseas. In 2006 Austcare developed a partnership with ActionAid International, an organisation that Austcare believed had a strong focus on human security and community development.

## A strong history in Landmine Action and Cluster Munitions

In 1994 Austcare and other members of the Australian Council for Overseas Aid (ACFOA) began to work together to educate the public, other NGOs and the media about anti-personnel mines during the **International Campaign to Ban Landmines**. Their aim was to create support for a moratorium on the making and selling of anti-personnel mines through letter writing and lobbying of Australian parliaments while supporting the international campaign on landmines and organisations like Vietnam War Veterans of America Foundation, Oxfam, the Red Cross and Austcare's partner, Handicap International.

Mine clearance was seen as an integral part of refugee resettlement and Austcare did a lot of this work through the British mine clearing charity, The HALO Trust.

Austcare received much publicity through Chris Moon's ultra-marathon in 1998. Mr Moon lost his right arm and right leg in 1995 when he stepped on a landmine in Mozambique whilst working for The HALO Trust. In July 1997 he ran 200 km in four days with the Australian Army. The run was also part of Austcare's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations and helped to raise awareness of the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel mines and how they inhibited the return home of hundreds of thousands of refugees. In September 1998 he completed the Outback Challenge with John Bryant, runner and journalist, which raised funds for mine action programs.

In 1999 the Australian Government contract to manage the **Destroy a Minefield Campaign** was awarded to Austcare. Individuals, schools, community groups and the corporate sector had the opportunity to sponsor the destruction of landmines in Cambodia. The Princess Diana Fund provided \$200,000 for the operation of this scheme and the Australian government provided another \$200,000, with the rest of the money coming from fundraising efforts run by schools, community groups and businesses who would 'adopt' minefields which had been given a high priority for clearance by the United Nations. The money raised would help to fund mine clearing and facilitate the return of the land to the local community for productive use. For every \$2 raised through fundraising by the Australian people, the Australian Government and The Princess Diana Fund provided an extra dollar. It was hoped that in this way \$1.2 million would be raised to clear mines. Austcare did this work in Cambodia. The campaign was launched nationally in March 2000 with schools taking part in a **Destroy a Minefield Hopscotch-athon** to raise money and awareness about demining programs in Cambodia. St Margaret's Anglican School in Brisbane, Moerlina Primary School in Perth, Aranmore Catholic College in Perth and Goodwood Primary School in Adelaide, were some of the schools that took part in **Hopscotch-athons** in their respective city centres to publicise this event.

By 2000 the scheme had raised over \$175,000 in pledges and minefields around the village of Ta Peng in the Siem Reap province of Cambodia had been cleared. Safe access was provided to the villages and the villagers had safe access to their water supply.

In 2004 in partnership with the International Campaign to Ban Landmines – Australian Network, Austcare launched **Landmine Action Week**. In that same year Austcare contributed a researcher to the *Landmine Monitor Report 2004*, an annual initiative of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines. This publication monitored and reported on the implementation and compliance with the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty.

From 1997-2005 the Australian government spent \$100 million on mine action work. In 2005 the Australian government announced a \$75 million, five-year mine action strategy. As part of that strategy \$4.5 million was to be spent over three years in Cambodia. As part of that program, Austcare received \$2.6 million for its **Integrated Mine Action and Development Program**. This was a five-year program which was carried out with the Cambodian Mine Action Centre in the province of Banteay Meanchey.

By 2007 Austcare was continuing its work along the heavily mined K5 belt in north-western Cambodia.

In mine affected villages, Austcare chose men and women from the most vulnerable families and trained them to be local de-miners. This ensured the long-term sustainability of the work and provided a livelihood for vulnerable families. Cleared land was given to vulnerable people for agricultural use.

### Landmine work in Other Countries

In conjunction with the Land Mine Resource Centre for Lebanon and, after interviewing survivors of cluster munitions, Austcare set up a local community centre in southern Lebanon. Training in computer and language skills and livelihood opportunities were offered there. Survivor assistance training included: the health needs of survivors, campaigning, the rights of survivors and mine risk education.

In the Burmese refugee camps located in northern Thailand Austcare partnered with Handicap International to provide mine risk education in schools. Programs were developed in conjunction with the students and a range of interactive educational methods that aimed to help students and the wider refugee community to acquire the knowledge, skills and appropriate behaviour to avoid the risk of injury through mines.

**In Australia**, a number of awareness-raising and community education events were held. For example in April 2007, Austcare organised an event in Martin Place to raise money and awareness, at which The Hon Greg Hunt, then Australian Government's Special Representative on Mine Action and Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs, made the official Australian Government Landmine Action Week statement, committing \$12 million to mine action in Cambodia for 2007 - 2008. This event was also attended by Austcare's Ambassador for Mine Action Michael Milton, who took part in a race through a simulated landmine field.



Landmine Action Week activities Martin Place, Sydney, April 2007



From 2008 – 2010, Austcare was a member of the **Steering Committee of the Cluster Munitions Coalition** and formed the Cluster Munition Coalition (Australia). The CMCA led a civil society campaign to negotiate for the strongest possible convention banning the use of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians and for the Government to develop domestic legislation to support this convention. Activities included launching and coordinating a number of campaigning events in Australia, and representing Austcare at the preparatory meetings of the convention in Vienna, Wellington and Dublin. Austcare's Ambassador for Mine Action John Rodsted represented Austcare at the Signing Conference in Oslo in December 2008. The CMCA was nominated for the 2008 Nobel Peace Prize.



Pitt Street Mall July 2008

In 2008, Austcare also engaged in armed violence reduction programming, in direct support of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development and with buy-in from the core group responsible for implementation of the Geneva Declaration. Funding was received from AusAID to conduct a Baseline Assessment of Armed Violence in Timor-Leste, in partnership with Geneva-based Small Arms Survey.

### Austcare becomes ActionAid – 1 June 2009

Austcare first began working with ActionAid International in 2005 during the response to the South Asian earthquake. Austcare continued to work with ActionAid International in 2006 when it worked with vulnerable women in Sri Lanka, after the tsunami, and again in 2007/8 when Austcare was able to respond, through its partnership with ActionAid International, to several emergencies in the Asia region.

As they worked together, Austcare and ActionAid International developed an effective and respectful working relationship and recognised that they had similar visions and values. Austcare found that by working with ActionAid International it was able to leverage off its networks and knowledge of local stakeholders and events to expand its reach and capacity to help more people across the globe. Both Austcare and ActionAid International felt that their association enabled them to increase the scope, relevance and impact of their work.

From May 2006, the Austcare Board, under the presidency of The Rt Hon Ian Sinclair AC and the leadership of CEOs Michael Smith and then Archie Law, a series of meetings were held between the two organisations to strengthen cooperation and steps were taken to work towards Austcare becoming a full Affiliate Member of ActionAid International.

The rationale for Austcare to join the ActionAid International (AAI) federation was for the organisation to:

- become a member of a global federation fighting poverty and injustice;
- increase its influence on the policies and positions of the Australian Government and Australian Corporates that cause poverty and injustice;
- increase its engagement with, and support from, the Australian community.

Austcare became a full affiliate of ActionAid International at the AAI Board meeting on 4 April 2009 and began operating as ActionAid Australia on 1 June 2009.

The Austcare Board decided that Austcare would develop a transition strategy to guide the transition of Austcare to ActionAid Australia through to December 2010. The resulting “ActionAid Australia Strategic Plan 2009-2010: Rights to End Poverty” was adopted by the ActionAid Australia Board in December 2008.



ActionAid Australia Office

## Annex 1: Presidents, Chairs, national Directors and Chief Executive Officers over the years

### Austcare's first Chairman and first President: Major General Paul A. Cullen

Major General Cullen was Austcare's first chairman from 1968-1970 and Austcare's first president from 1970-1990.

Major Cullen's lifetime commitment to refugees was recognised in 1981 when he was awarded the Nansen medal, the highest accolade of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The award included \$50,000 which Major General Cullen donated to Afghan refugees through Austcare. The donation contributed towards the construction of a ten bed ward for Afghani refugee children at the Pishin District Hospital.

In 1990 the Paul Cullen award recognising outstanding contributions to the well-being of refugees was established.

Date	Presidents
1970 – 1990	Major General Paul A. Cullen <i>Prior to becoming President of Austcare, Major General Paul A. Cullen was chairman from 1967-1971. The position of President became available at the end of 1969 when it was realised that the constitution allowed for a President and a Chairperson. The role of Chairperson ceased to exist from 2009.</i>
1999 - 2007	President Emeritus
1990 – 1999	Rev John E. Mavor AM
2000 - 2009	The Rt Hon Ian Sinclair AC
2009 - Present	The Hon John Dowd AO QC

### Chairpeople

Date	Chairpeople
1967 - 1968	Rev. H.L Perkins
1968 - 1970	Major General Paul A. Cullen
1973 TBC – 1977	R.G. Fairlie
1977- 1989	John Mavor
1990 - 1991	Sid Bartsch
1993 - 2008	Barbara Young

### National Directors

Date	National Directors
1967-1968	L.J. Bartley (Executive Director)
1968 – 1969	Rev Geoffrey S. Parish (Executive Director)
1970 – 1972	J.H. Rorke

1972 - 1976	Rev A. C. Prior
1976 – 1980	R. H. Dougherty
1980 - 1982	Kevin J. Moore
1982 – 1986	Carole Devine
1986 – 1997	Eric Ellem

### Chief Executive Officers

Date	Chief Executive Officers
1997 – 2002	Warren Glenny
2003 – 2007	Michael G. Smith AO
2008 to present	Archie Law

### Annex 2: logos over the years

2006 - 2009



1997 - 2004



1980 - 1997

