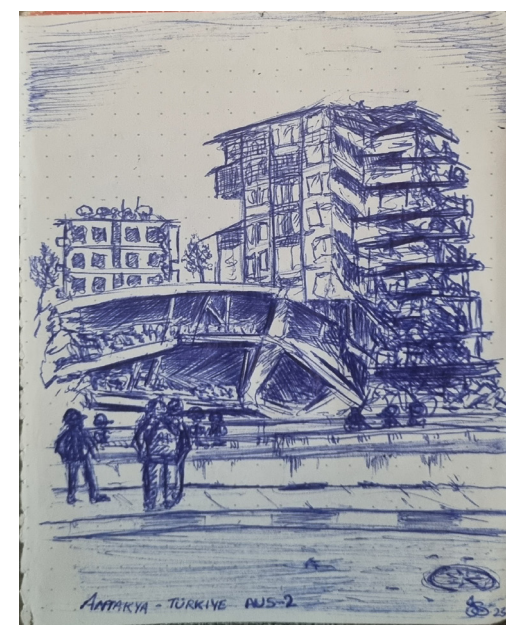# Fire + Rescue New South Wales

AUS-02

Introduction

AUS02 deployed to Antakya and conducted search and rescue activities across 27 worksites, including managing a Sector Coordination Cell (SCC10) and UCC.

Wins

• Increased organisational focus towards mental health and wellbeing of the team and their families through:

• Development and use of a closed family support Facebook group, providing timely updates on the status of the team to families.
• Wellbeing support provided in-country through embedded multi-disciplined peer support officers complemented by access to FRNSW psychologists.
• Wellbeing support and literacy
session during return journey coupled with extended transit as an inherit way of providing decompression time.

• Translators – access to translators significantly impoved the effectiveness of the team operating in a non-English speaking environment. Having an embedded team member who could also translate provided additional context and background regarding the local environment and culture.

• Remotely piloted aircraft systems – the ability to include and utilise RPAS made reconnaissance, monitoring, and observations significantly easier and reduced risk to team members. Having in-country RPAS support enhanced troubleshooting capabilities to overcome legislated airspace challenges.

• Innovation – use of materials, specifically lumber, to improvise shoring given the limited supply and the local priority to use as firewood for warmth.

Challenges

• Briefing fatigue – Due to repeated briefings delivered with no change to operational circumstances/objectives. This proved challenging to ensure staff safety was maintained with limited, reliable information available. AUS02 improvements for future deployments involve:

• Ensuring clearly defined roles and responsibilities within the briefing to mitigate duplication or misinformation.

• Manage the briefings to ensure they are efficient and concise considering 24 hour operations.

• Limited supply of PPE including Tyvek and gloves considering contamination issues, specifically with a focus on ASR5. AUS02 has now introduced regular reviews of the equipment contained in the cache to ensure they remain fit for purpose and that there are not better alternatives available.

Team Website

Mission Return Article
About USAR