

Austrian Forces Disaster Relief Unit



AUT-02

The Austrian Forces Disaster Relief Unit (AFDRU) deployment in Hatay started on 7 February 2023. End of mission was Monday, 13 February where the team ceased field operations and relocated to Adana airport.

Basic information on AFDRU:

Heavy USAR Team
Mission Duration: 7 – 13 February 2023 (the team left Turkey on 16 February)

Number of personnel: 82
Number of Search Dogs: 6
Deployment Area: Hatay



Wins and challenges:

The most positive thing about the AFDRU-deployment was that 9 victims could be rescued alive which contributed to the positive attitude of all team members throughout the deployment.

Coordination in Hatay worked overall smoothly. Nevertheless, there were issues with internet connectivity causing a lot of teams to not fill in the ICMS forms.

AFDRU provided two liaison officers from the very beginning to reinforce and support the UCC in Antakya on a 24/7 basis throughout our deployment.

Cooperation with national teams on-site also worked smoothly in Antakya whereas cooperation with international teams could only be found in the BoO as all international teams were deployed in different sectors.

There was only 1 UCC in place during the first week which had to cover the whole earthquake affected area! This is normally a “no go” having in mind that overall 49 INSARAG-classified teams were deployed. Although a lot of SCCs were put in place the leadership span of the UCC was way too big.

Lessons Learned:

In the future ADFRU definitely will make use of the Austrian Chamber of Commerce as they facilitated AFDRU’s de-



ployment. When the team arrived means of transport were already organised by them and waited at Adana airport to be loaded.

In case there is no internet connection available in the deployment area AFDRU will forward the information from all ICMS-forms (e.g. worksite triage) in the future via phone to their homebase so that homebase can fill-in the ICMS accordingly. Doing so contributes to compacting the situational picture and facilitates the work of the UCC. Furthermore, USAR teams should not only rely on data transmission via WLAN but also have all the forms in paper form available.



As the UCC was overwhelmed in the beginning, more UCCs should be established in different areas from the very beginning in case the affected area is as big as it was in Turkey.

As ASR 1 & ASR 2 were not done by all USAR-teams (as inhabitants immediately stopped them to tell them to provide help immediately) AFDRU will define dedicated assessment teams which are able to conduct ASR 2, whereas the rest of the team can conduct ASR 3 & ASR 4.